00023641

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
Royal Asiatic Society.
CLASS

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 23 January, 2019

LETTERS

OF

SIR CHARLES BELL.

Painted by Anthony Stewart, Edinburgh 1804.
Engraved by W. Holl.

Charles Dell

LETTERS

OF

SIR CHARLES BELL,

K.H., F.R.S.L. & E.

SELECTED FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE

WITH HIS BROTHER

GEORGE JOSEPH BELL.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1870.

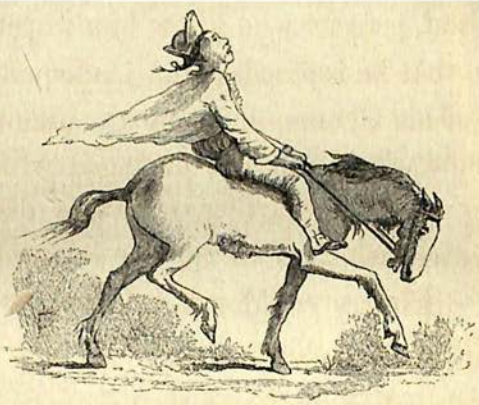
LONDON:
BRADBURY, EVANS, AND CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

PREFACE.

THE discovery of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, and the discoveries of Sir Charles Bell in the nervous system, were pronounced by Müller, the German physiologist, the two grandest discoveries that have ever been made in physiological science. To the genius of a great philosopher Sir Charles Bell united the qualities of a noble-minded man. This selection from his letters has been published that his character may be known to posterity in conjunction with his immortal discovery, that many traits of memorable persons and events may be preserved, and that future members of his profession may have the benefit of his admirable example. His rare originality, his profound knowledge, his varied accomplishments, his unremitting industry did not save him from long and anxious struggles, and he neither abated the cheerfulness which was

habitual to him, nor surrendered one jot of his independence. The many in every generation who are exposed to the same, or similar difficulties, will find comfort and courage in his high aims, inflexible principles, and calm perseverance. There are, indeed, passages in his letters which might lead persons who knew him imperfectly to imagine that he repined at the inadequate appreciation of his labours, and had a consciousness of their value which was not untinged with vanity. Nothing could be further from his disposition. The genius which was capable of making his leading discovery could not be blind to its vast importance, or sometimes avoid feeling that the world was slow to comprehend its reach and beauty. These were simple truths of which he could no more be ignorant than of the fact that he was a rational being; and with the frankness of an honest nature, untainted with affectation, he told his thoughts to the brother whom he regarded as a second self. But he had far too just an estimate of the littleness of man in the midst of the vastness of creation to give way to conceit, and too profound a faith in the Providence who governed the world to be otherwise

than deeply thankful for his lot. Vanity and discontent would have seemed to him falsehood, and none the less because he had extorted a magnificent secret from nature, and given it over to science.



DUMBYDYKES ON THE WILDYARD POWNEY.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Family History—John Bell of Gladsmuir—Sermon on the Death of William III.—William Bell—Episcopacy in Scotland—Penal Laws of 1745—George Bell's Memoranda—Charles Bell's Early Recollections—Charles goes to London 1

CHAPTER II.

First Letter from London—Baillie, Abernethy, Cooper, &c.—Sir Joseph Banks's Reception—Dinner at the Longmans'—Astley Cooper—Lodgings in Fludyer Street—Dining Out on the Wrong Day 18

CHAPTER III.

Letters from Home—Lynn's Kind Feeling—Opera—Athenian Club—Benjamin West—Scheme of Lectures—Shakspeare Gallery—Anatomy of Expression—Townley Collection—Sir C. Blicke—Macartney of St. Bartholomew's—Abernethy—Mrs. Billington—Grassini—"Honours for Charlie"—Economy of the Household—Visit to Sydney Smith—House of Commons—"Madness"—Speaker Onslow's House in Leicester Street 30

CHAPTER IV.

First Lectures—Lectures to Artists—The Invisible Girl—Poor Rates—Vauxhall with Abernethy—Tom Campbell—Princess Elizabeth and the Gardener—Lord Melville's Trial—Jeffrey and Moore—George's Marriage . . . 62

CHAPTER V.

PAGE

A Glimpse of the Country—Eating Husks with the Pigs—Prince Hoare—Letter Writing—The Brain, Mind, Madness—Household in Leicester Street—Dante's Inferno—St. Paul's—Ride with Abernethy—Angerstein Gallery—Bull-baiting—Second Course of Lectures—Elgin Marbles—First Discoveries in the Nerves 87

CHAPTER VI.

The Queen's Copy of his Book—New Idea of the Brain—Modern Athletes—Professorship of Anatomy to the Royal Academy—Carlyle's Election—The Opera 121

CHAPTER VII.

The Wounded from Corunna—Haslar Hospital—Burning of Drury Lane Theatre—Painting in Oil—Walter Scott—Critiques on Mrs. Siddons—Fee-book—Scotland—O. P. Riots—Jubilee—Scarlet Fever 138

CHAPTER VIII.

Illness—Pleasant Delirium—Experiments on the Nerves—Beefsteak Club—Windham—Burdett Riots—Windham's Death—Reminiscences addressed to Miss Shaw 163

CHAPTER IX.

Preparations for his Marriage—House-Pupils—Marriage Tour—New Life 183

CHAPTER X.

Great Windmill Street School—Difficulties in conveying the Property—Brougham and Lord Castlereagh—Museum and Lectures—Burning of Moscow—Hunt's Trial—The Authors of "Rejected Addresses" 196

CHAPTER XI.

PAGE

The College of Surgeons—Question put to him—Sir J. Reynolds's Portraits—His Ugolino—Vegetable Physiology—John Hunter's Portrait—Lectures on the "Brain"—Making acquaintance with his Curricle 206

CHAPTER XII.

French Politics—Middlesex Hospital Election—Poverty—Baron Driesen—Emperors and Kings in London—Delight in Teaching—Cassiobury Park—The Prince's Bad Humour—The Opera—Mons. Roux's Visit—Baron Driesen's Gift—Waverley—The Hospital—Sir J. McGregor, &c., at Lecture—Fresh Experiments on the Nerves—Anxieties about the Property in Windmill Street 211

CHAPTER XIII.

News of the Battle of Waterloo—Journey to Brussels—The Wounded—Attends the French Hospitals—The Field of Waterloo—Buonaparte's Platform—Map of the Ground—Delay at Ostend—Whitbread—Comparison between Brussels and Edinburgh—The Wounded French—Disaffection in Brussels before Waterloo—Wounded Friends—Letter to Horner on his Return from Waterloo—Study of Nature . . 227

CHAPTER XIV.

Cline's Hunterian Oration—Surgeon of the "Northumberland" and Buonaparte—A Dream—Desire to improve Military Hospitals—Colonel Hutchinson's Life—Professor Michel—Speaking French—Increase of Practice—How best to Publish his Nervous System—Visit from Mrs. John Bell—Praises of George's "Big Book"—Paper for the Royal Society—John Shaw in Paris—Wilson's Sudden Death—Effect on the School 253

CHAPTER XV.

PAGE

Royal Society Papers—Certificate of his Birth—Fishing in Scotland—George Bell's First Lecture—Squinting—Second Edition of "The Anatomy of Expression"—George Bell's Serious Illness—The President's Promise—Charles Appointed Professor to the College of Surgeons—Vindication of Fishing—College of Surgeons Lectures—Sending part of his Museum to Edinburgh 274

CHAPTER XVI.

Sir A. Carlyle's Hunterian Oration—Fishing in Wales—Animal Mechanics—John Shaw's Death—Canning's Death—Charter desired for the London University—Second Part of Animal Mechanics—Dining at Horne's—John Murray's—Meeting of the Professors of the London University—His First Salmon—Dalquharran—Edinburgh . . . 292

CHAPTER XVII.

Disturbed Meeting—"Principles of the Law of Scotland"—Pike-trolling at Luton—Cuvier—"The Hand"—Paley—Close of his Connection with the London University—Elected into the Council of the College of Surgeons—Brougham and the Notes on Paley—Leonard Horner's Resignation of the Wardenship of the University—Panshanger—London during the Reform Bill Debate—Order of the Guelph—Scene at the Levée—Brook Street—Squinting at his Rod 309

CHAPTER XVIII.

Judge Alderson—Ancrum—Edinburgh—Merchiston House—Apology of the Fisher—The Tweed—Examination on the Medical Bill before a Committee of the House of Commons—Meeting of the British Association in Edinburgh—Old Recollections—Effect of "the Country" on Composition—Founding of the School of the Middlesex Hospital—Lyndhurst—Lord Palmerston's Park—Ringwood—Christchurch—Edinburgh Professorship—Hesitation—Acceptance . 329

CHAPTER XIX.

PAGE

Leaving London—Strange Sensations on reaching Edinburgh —Kindly Reception in Edinburgh—Lord Lothian's Waters —Craigie Hall—Examination of young Doctors—Queen's Proclamation at the Cross—Visit to London—Jeffreys—Sir Astley Cooper—Winter in Edinburgh—View from Ainslie Place—Fishing with Christopher North—Vision of the Day of Judgment—Recollections of Chenies—Kinfauns Castle—Frank from "Douro"—Life's Difficulties—Lockhart's Life of Scott—Pettigrew's Memoir of "Sir Charles Bell" 348

CHAPTER XX.

Paris—Nice to Genoa—Entering Rome—John Bell's Grave—The Vatican—Frascati—St. Spirito—Sight-seeing at Rome —Perugia—Bologna—Home 373

CHAPTER XXI.

Airthry—"The Burn"—George's Blindness—Hooton—Sir H. Fleetwood—Death of a Favourite Pupil—Anxieties—Serious Attack of Illness when about to leave Home—Sufferings at Manchester—Last Letter to his Brother—Hallow Park—Walk to the Churchyard—A Sweet "Resting-place" —The Last Evening—Sudden Death 388

LADY BELL'S RECOLLECTIONS 405

ADDITIONAL LETTERS from the Ven. Archdeacon Sinclair, Dr. R. Ferguson, Lord Jeffrey, and Lord Cockburn . . . 424

FRAGMENTS ON FLY-FISHING AND SKETCHING 429

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF CHARLES BELL . . . . . *Frontispiece.*

DUMBYDYKES . . . . . *At end of Preface.*

THE FISHER 271

THE SUTER AND THE SOU 419

LETTERS

OF

CHARLES BELL.

CHAPTER I.

Family History—John Bell of Gladsmuir—Sermon on the Death of William III.—William Bell—Episcopacy in Scotland—Penal Laws of 1745—George Bell's Memoranda—Charles Bell's Early Recollections—Charles goes to London.

THE family from which Charles Bell was descended have, for nearly three centuries, been either merchants or members of the learned professions. Glasgow was their home for most of that period, and they are incidentally mentioned both in Law's Memorials and in Cleland's History of Glasgow; while their genealogical tables show them to have been connected by marriage with the best gentry of the land. But it is not until the end of the 17th century that family papers preserve the more minute records of their history. From that time it seems to have been a habit among them to jot down the most remarkable incidents of their lives and times, thus leaving behind them materials for tracing out the pecu-

liarities of the race, and fostering, by their example, the hereditary talents and industry of their families.

The first autobiography extant is headed—"The more memorable passages of the Life and Times of Mr. John Bell, Minister of Gladsmuir, written by himself." From this manuscript it appears that he was born on the 2nd of February, 1676, and was endowed with the industry, steadiness of purpose, and power of overcoming difficulties, which belonged to the next generations. John Bell was born in Glasgow; but the clerical profession often detaches its members from their birth-places, and removing them to distant homes, gradually slackens the cords of intimacy and of kindred. Such proved to be the case in the present instance. Ordained when only twenty years old, John Bell was at once appointed to the parish of Broughton; but four years later, in 1700, "the Church thought fit to transport" him to the newly erected parish of Gladsmuir, in Haddington, "where," he writes, "I found myself in hard circumstances, having exchanged two hundred submissive people at Broughton for twelve hundred obstinate people in Gladsmuir, and to be collegiate with a lot of brethren to whom I was entirely a stranger."

The youth of four-and-twenty, however, soon became a marked man in the land of his adoption, and obtained such fame for impressive eloquence, as to have the duty imposed upon him of preach-

ing the Sermon on the death of William the Third before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, then sitting at Edinburgh. Before the news of even the King's illness had reached Scotland, John Bell had been asked by the minister of the new church of Edinburgh to take his pulpit on that day; but when the demise of the King was announced, he naturally expected that, on such an occasion, the proposal should fall to the ground. "And," as he says, "I dealt earnestly with Mr. Moncrieff to loose me from my promise, chiefly in regard that the melancholy news made it more proper for him to do it, and made it a bold enterprize in me to undergo so severe a task, I being but a young man, &c. But he would hear no entreaties of mine. . . . When I came there, I found one of the throngest assemblies that I ever preached to. . . . However, it pleased God so to bless that day's work, that the remembrance of it is savoury, and I hope will never be forgotten by some."

That the young Minister of Gladsmuir was a man of vigorous intellect and personal courage is also shown in this manuscript, by the tact, boldness, and presence of mind he unconsciously displays in the account he gives of his adventures when selected to undertake the delicate task of dispossessing the Episcopalians of Haddington from the parish church, on the death of one of the incumbents, according to the law passed on the subject after the Revolution.

He died at the early age of thirty-two, and his parishioners, who deeply regretted his loss, raised an ornate tomb to his memory, near the rural little church of Gladsmuir.*

He married the daughter of Major Learmonth, of Newholm, and left several children; but circumstances estranged them from each other; and in his son William's "Notes of my life for the perusal of my children," a casual allusion to "my brothers" is almost all that is said of any but Joseph.

Born in 1704, "I was," he says, "left at my parents' death, at four years of age, to the care of good friends whom Providence raised up for our support. . . . While at the University of Edinburgh, and in my sister's house, by reading and conversation, I saw (by good Providence for me) the errors of my first education (my F.† being a Presbyterian minister) . . . in consequence hereof discovered the necessity, and had the comfort of being admitted a member of the Catholic and Apostolic Church in Scotland, and was b—p—d‡ by Bp. Fullerton (Jan. 8, 1723). By this change, tho' I lost the countenance of my relations (my Br. Joseph excepted), yet was never destitute of friends, but found utter strangers become such."

Having fixed on the Church as his profession,

* Sir Walter Scott, in his "Treatise on Demonology," refers to John Bell's two discourses on Witchcraft as containing the most explicit directions for the detection of those linked to the service of the enemy of mankind.

† Father. ‡ Baptised.

William Bell—after visiting the Low Countries and Italy—was ordained incumbent of the Episcopal Chapel of Doune, near Stirling. In 1744, he resigned this charge to become colleague of Bishop Keith, in his "Episcopal Meeting-house" in Edinburgh.

His diary at this period gives a curious sketch of the state of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, after Prince Charles Edward's expedition in 1745.

"The P—e coming into this country, its consequences were a great trial to many, and has proved fatal to our distressed Church, by bringing upon us new and severe penal laws, and abridging our former liberty for worship. But the ways of Providence are unsearchable. Perhaps good in the issue may flow from all this.

"The news of the defeat of Culloden reached Edinburgh with certainty on the 20th of April, 1746. The Episcopal clergy were so much alarmed as to shut their meeting-houses immediately. But I resolved to go out to morning prayers as usual. I thought we ought not in duty and decency to desist from officiating; that it would rather give our enemies a handle against us, that we fancied, since the P—e's arms had failed, our ministry had ceased. . . . In May, all the meeting-houses in Edinburgh were shut up and padlocked, with an inscription on the several doors—'Shut up by order of the Sheriff' . . . and in September an Act passed, that every Episcopal minister officiating to more than four besides the family, shall,

for the first offence suffer six months' imprisonment; for the second, banishment to the plantations for life; and if they shall return, imprisonment for life. Also, every one of the hearers in a meeting exceeding four, a fine of five pounds for the first offence; for the second, two years' imprisonment. A meeting-house is designed to be any house where more than four persons besides the family meet together for Divine service. . . . At this time many persons not of our congregation applied to me for the benefit of my prayers, and Bishop Keith, finding me willing to minister alone, agreed to my doing so. I thus made an increase of our congregation, officiating in the houses of the people, and always adding four more to the family, till another act was passed to forbid any one in holy orders to officiate in a house of which he was not the master. . . . Such of the clergy as did not take the oaths, and register, and receive ordination from English or Irish bishops, their Orders were declared null and void. Yet, blessed be God, we were enabled to stand this trial also with reputation and advantage; for of our whole clergy (amounting to nearly one hundred) only four complied, and they, by the Chaplain Act, were cut off from any indulgence,—as we all would have been."

The persecuted Episcopal Church of Scotland was reduced to this extreme state of depression and poverty, in consequence of the devotion of most of its members to the House of Stuart.

William Bell was attached more to Church principles than to State politics. From the commencement he knew that his conscientious change of religious opinions entailed upon him an entire sacrifice of worldly ambition, and that his career as an Episcopal clergyman in Scotland could lead to nothing but a life of privation. In spite of the distresses and persecutions of the times, however, he obtained what he valued above all earthly gain,—the deep attachment of his little flock.

His first wife, Lilias Grahame, of Bowquaple, died in 1750, having survived all her children. Seven years later, in 1757, he married again,—Margaret Morice, the elder daughter of an Episcopal clergyman. Mrs. Bell and her sister Cecilia * were early left orphans, and were educated by their grandfather, Bishop White, afterwards Primus of Scotland. To him Mrs. Bell owed the piety and accomplishments which distinguished her; and from him she inherited that remarkable talent for drawing which she transmitted to her children and grandchildren, but especially to her youngest son, Charles. Two beautiful little miniatures of her painting, "Mary Queen of Scots" and "Prince Charlie," are still preserved.

William Bell died on the 20th of September,

* Afterwards resident with her nephews, and known with them by the loving appellation of "Auntie."

1779, aged 75, leaving his wife and six children very slenderly provided for.

From a manuscript in which George (the fourth son) jotted down some "memoranda of my life, to tell my children somewhat of those who gave them birth, and to furnish them with lessons for the conduct of their lives," some graphic pictures of the family life may be gleaned.

"I was born," he writes, "in 1770, at Fountain Bridge, near Edinburgh. My infancy was passed there. We removed to town in 1778, chiefly on account of my father's age, and inability to travel in to church. He died before I knew the value of a father's guidance. His great delight was to sit surrounded by his books. I remember him so—his elbow chair, with a small table, in a pleasant window looking north over gardens; and, again, I recollect sitting by him on his death-bed. He was asleep, and in a dream called out to catch the man who was running off with his books.

"After his death we resided in the upper part of a house in George Street, the rest of the 'land' belonging to my aunt; and the rent of our houses with considerable aid from her, and a small allowance made by the nonjuring Episcopalians to the widow of their clergyman, enabled us to live.

"My mother was a most excellent woman, well educated, and of sweet disposition. Left

with a large family of children, she struggled with great virtue and fortitude against distresses which I did not at the time understand, but cannot now call to mind without bitter regret and sorrow. In myself and my dear and most beloved brother Charles, she had her greatest comfort in her later days. This is a consolation to me which the wealth of worlds would not induce me to forfeit. Our circumstances were so narrow that my education was much stinted—the rest of the family expenses having gradually increased so that my schooling, which required no more than five-shillings a quarter, could not be continued after I was eleven years old.

"I tried to continue my Latin education at home, but having no master and no one to direct me—to point the path or smooth its ruggedness—I made poor progress. I was left to my own self-culture, and owed all my other acquirements, including a knowledge of French, to my mother's tender care.

"In 1791 I passed Advocate without disgrace, and I entered on my profession devoid of friends or interest.

"My dear brother Charles was born in 1774. His education, like my own, was stinted; and we have both been our own teachers of almost all we know. I always distinguished in Charles a very solid judgment and clear head. He had also a great genius for drawing, and he has found this

talent of great use in life. He was early destined for the profession of a surgeon under John."

* * * * *

In 1839 a short sketch of Sir Charles Bell's life was published in Pettigrew's "Medical Portrait Gallery," together with an engraving of his portrait, by Ballantyne. Opposite to Pettigrew's observation, that "he was educated at the High School of Edinburgh," he wrote, "Nonsense! I received no education but from my mother, neither reading, writing, cyphering, nor anything else."

"My education was the example set me by my brothers. There has been, in my day, a good deal said about education, but they appear to me to put out of sight *example*, which is all in all. There was, in all the members of the family, a reliance on self, a true independence, and by imitation I obtained it.

"I scarcely know how it arose, but still it was so, that I had little knowledge of my father's family. His memory I always held in respect, but I knew him not as a man. I had no feature of his character to fix upon, and this I have often regretted. I have but one distinct recollection of him, in his dressing-gown, and that in his last illness my mother took me from betwixt his knees, being too lively, and insensible of his sufferings.

"What a picture the manuscript entries, made by my father, present! I see him struggling with difficulties, and rising superior to them. I see

him supported in all embarrassments by religion. I find him respected and beloved. I am now more grateful to Providence for the example set before me by my parents than if riches and honours had descended from them—honours these certainly were.

"When I look back to those days, my affection centres in my mother, and in my dear brother George. Yet Robert was most kind to me. I was his playfellow and pet.

"My first recollections are as a little boy, by my mother's side. I recollect the dining-room, the view south, the mild affection with which she would stop her wheel, or point the letters (of my lesson) with her stocking-wire.

"I must have been either wise or cunning in those days, for, having offended her, I did not attempt reconciliation all at once, but I watched her out and presented myself to her whilst picking her way in the crowded street, when her open arms and benevolent smile received me.

"I hope I was a comfort to her. On her death, John said to me, 'Let it be a pleasure to you to reflect that you were always her comfort.' She was my only teacher. Notwithstanding our poverty in my childhood, I suspect the connections of the family were then superior to what they have been since. I allude to the fine old ladies who were wont to visit my mother, and with an *empressement* which struck me even then. These were the relics of old Jacobite families,

stately dames, and I think Sir Walter Scott must have seen much of the same class in his boyhood. Many of his stories come on my recollection as familiar things forgotten!

"For twenty years of my life I had but one wish—to gratify my mother, and to do something to alleviate what I saw her suffer.

"I suppose others feel as I did. It belongs to our nature to associate the being whom we love with our aspirations. When anything was proposed to be done, some fancy in my own mind, beyond my powers to attain, the question from childhood took always this fashion, 'Could I not accomplish it were it to please her or save her?'

"No wonder that in losing her there was a long blank, an indifference to all accustomed objects. I hardly know how ambition was again produced in my mind.

"She must have been well educated for her time. I know no more of the motions of the earth, moon, and stars, than her little contrivance then taught me as a boy. I recollect the room and the spot where she formed a ball, and passed a stocking-wire thro' it to show me the poles and the revolution of the seasons, and gave me the first idea of a truth which the mere senses could not convey, the motion of all that seemed stationary in the diurnal and annual motions of the earth.

"'The education at the High School,' which I

attended for two years, was to me torture and humiliation. Adams, loved by all good scholars, was to me a stupid tyrant. I can remember brightening on the display of Cæsar's Bridges over the Rhine. Anything demonstrative or mechanical, or tending to Natural Philosophy, I comprehended better than my companions; but the memory of verses or Latin rules, without intellectual comprehension of some principles, I was almost incapable of.

"This incapacity depressed me, and it was only when in professional education I found subjects more suited to my capacities that I began to respect myself, and favourably compare myself with my fellow students.

"Memory should be cultivated. It bestows great advantages. Mine was ever deficient. I could not, and cannot, venture on a quotation either in conversation or in public discourse. Quotation, directed with good taste, gives interest and elegance; but memory, without the direction of sound judgment, is a poor substitute for reason.*

* In some memoranda furnished by Lady Bell, she says:—"He often regretted that he had not what he called 'an education, that his brothers made a plaything of him, excusing themselves with this expression, even when he was a child, 'Oh, never mind, Charlie will do very well. No fear for Charlie.' And so he had only the common rudiments of the commonest branches given to him. All the rest he acquired for himself, and took great pains, as he advanced in age, to make up for his fancied deficiencies. Being anxious to communicate easily with foreigners, he had French and Italian masters to read with him, even within the last few years of his life, and he gained considerable

"Allen, the painter, was a man very dear to me in my early boyhood. There was sunshine the afternoon he came to me. He was quite a man to a boy's humour. He was wont at all times to salute me, 'Ha! brother Brush, let's see what you have been doing!' To him I am very principally indebted for my pleasure in drawing.

"He was a little man, and, I think, not very straight in his legs; they were certainly very small. His nose was ill-shaped, his eye grey, but with a sharpness and liveliness in saying his little nothings. He wore his hair in a long Ramilies queue, and on the temples it had a thatched appearance, which would have been more picturesque on the roof of a cottage. He gave me his very beautiful studies from the Antique, and from Raphael's Cartoons, to copy, and was very good-natured in his praise. I meet with these heads sometimes, and hail them as something very old and very melancholy sweet.

"I remember the old drawing-room window, where I used to sit copying these drawings. The Lame Beggar, with the large nether lip, in the Cartoons, is an old acquaintance.

"David Allen was much thought of when a student in Rome, and from the beauty and simplicity of his 'Origin of Painting' (which was engraved), we may judge that he had taste and knowledge for a Painter of History.

fluency, and a good accent in speaking. Long before leaving Edinburgh, he *read* both languages with facility."

"This was his theme, and he was wont to fill us with a notion of the poverty of our country by describing the riches of Italy in the picturesque; the strong features of the Italian beggars clothed in rags—the marked picturesqueness of the Franciscan friars, and the free limbs of the Lazzaroni.

"He illustrated the 'Gentle Shepherd.'"

"Does not association with evening sounds far distant prove the duty of a parent to attend to this in education? How I connect mine with that summer at Stonebyres.*

"With what panting expectation I was wont to run to the top of Blackford Hill, to look down upon the house. The 'ploy' of taking tea on the green plot in the midst of the wood, and the gathering of nuts there, was pure felicity. How, even in those days, did I love to wander in the wood and visit the herd upon the hill. Then it was *sensation* merely; now, in the recollection and secret combination of these first ideas, there is something more. For long I could not conceive how I had imbibed so strong an idea of desolation occasioned by death in a family—in reading a novel for instance—but in Stonebyres I saw it; the hunters sold, the hounds diminished to an old pointer, the servants take their leave, the old castle

* While a child, Charles had been sent for a few weeks to the village school of Lesmahago, with permission to visit his kind old friend, Mrs. Vere, of Stonebyres, who had nursed him as a baby, and loved him as if he had been her son.

desolate—even the poultry in the yard moult feathers.

"Yet this desolation was a contrast to that around me when I first came to London. Happily free from the slightest tinge of constitutional melancholy, yet I acutely felt my loneliness, the total blank of affection or anything like reciprocal support. But I sometimes felt a secret satisfaction in the difficulties I encountered."

* * * * *

George's memoranda continue thus:—

"Charles' natural clearness of head and neatness of hand and the vigorous correctness of his conception, with hard labour, made him an admirable surgeon and one of the first anatomists of the day while he was yet a boy not entered upon life.

"In spring, 1797, Charles and I came to the resolution of writing each on his own profession, and I have at last settled on the Bankrupt Law. To study this law thoroughly requires the study of the whole Civil Code. I wrote something on the subject this autumn, and Charles began his 'System of Dissections.'

* * * * *

"It was necessary to go to our sister at Cult, and Charles and I walked out. Charles had his manuscripts in a small roll at his back, I my book for my notes on Mercantile Law; and I remember we stopt to rest ourselves and drink at a stream at the roadside, and amused ourselves

with thinking how pleasant it would be to remember this outset in life when we were advanced somewhat higher.

* * * * *

"I strongly urged Charles to go to London to see, at least, what the world at large had to offer. I felt when he went away (23 Nov., 1804) that he had left me never to meet again but for a visit; that our long brotherly life of uninterrupted companionship was at an end. Yet I believed this to be most manifestly for his advantage, and forced my inclination to advise and promote it. My correspondence with Charles I have kept regularly—at least, his to me, and they show his progress."

CHAPTER II.

First Letter from London—Baillie, Abernethy, Cooper, &c.—Sir Joseph Banks's Reception—Dinner at the Longmans'—Astley Cooper—Lodgings in Fludyer Street—Dining Out on the Wrong Day.

1804.

On the fly-leaf of the bound volume of these letters is written, in George's hand, "I seriously advised him to go to London for a winter to look about him, and either return with augmented knowledge of his profession, or remain if he found a reputable opening. He left this on the 23rd of November, 1804, and the correspondence here collected will show the series of our struggles."*

York: York Tavern,
Friday evening.

Dear George,

I had no time last night, before the return of the mail, to make my promise good to you by writing. I kept it in another instance, however,

* To keep within bounds, it was necessary to make a selection from the mass of correspondence carried on almost daily between the brothers for more than thirty years. But enough is given to show the general course of Charles Bell's life and thoughts. To account for the apparent egotism of some of these letters, it must be remembered that George was his second self, that Charles wrote to him as if thinking aloud, and that he was fully conscious that the surrounding circumstances were interesting to his brother merely as they affected his own failure or success.

by remaining here all night, tho' quite able to have continued my journey.

I really enjoy travelling in the mail. To-day is a fair here, and I have been much gratified in gaping through the streets and visiting the Minster.

Do not let this expedition of mine make you decide upon my total estrangement from Edinburgh, for I repeat to you that it will be signal exaltation which will make so total a revolution in my sentiments and confirmed habits as will allow me to think of an establishment separate from those lesser, quieter felicities which I have enjoyed with you and auntie.

The bustle of preparation for dinner dissipates these recollections, and I only add that the regret of sitting quietly down in domestic ease, and neglecting my fortune (with which I am proud enough to connect the happiness of my friends), I shall not encounter; but this principle I shall not carry too far: I am certain that I shall be able to hit the medium.

Keep my auntie moving, take care of your health, buy a great coat, and do not neglect your annual cough.

Don't you think there is a certain confident air in my letter? That arises from being in a spacious room, well lighted, and a good dinner before me. You must not expect regular letters, and long ones only sometimes.

Your affectionate C. B.

28th November, 1804,
London Coffee House.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I sit down, before going to bed, to give you my feelings of *things in general.*

From Huntingdon to London is sixty miles. These, on Saturday evening and Sunday morning, are walked over, there being no mail carried forward. So I arrived at the Bull and Mouth on Sunday morning at seven o'clock. I dressed. One feels much like a gentleman on being dressed, after a long abstinence from that comfort; then I dashed in good style into the London Coffee House, where I have been since, with no absolute want of conveniences—as of food, drink, and a warm bed—but there is a sad want of comforts and enjoyments. If this be the season that John Bull selects for cutting his throat, Sunday must be the day, for then London is in all its ugliness, all its naked deformity; the houses are like ruins, the streets deserted. . . . .

30th.

For these two days I have not been idle. I have called on Baillie, Lynn, Thomas, Wilson, Abernethy, Cooper, Gartshore.* I believe I shall find every attention from the medical people here.

* Though Charles Bell had no personal friends in London, his name was already known to the profession by his lectures, his models, and designs. He was associated with John in his works on anatomy. He had himself published two volumes of his "System of Dissection," with plates taken from his own drawings, in 1799 and 1801; and had also, in 1801–2, published engravings of the Arteries, Brain, and Nerves.

Astley Cooper called this evening when I was out. He left a card of appointment to meet him in St. Thomas's, and of invitation to dinner. I do not know what puts it in my head that Wilson * would like to make a connection with me. I have had some conversation with him to-day. Wilson, you know, is second in descent from Dr. Hunter in the school of Great Windmill Street. . . . .

Your character is higher than you are aware of, and I wish you were more sensible of your own importance. My happiness is more founded on the hope of your rapid advancement than of my own fortune. But I must hasten to a conclusion. I hear the increased sound of carriages rolling over the chimney-tops like the sound of many waters. The opera and play are over, and it is near twelve o'clock.

I will take your advice as to consulting some painter on the "Anatomy of Expression," but I will not take the manuscript from Longman until I am settled.

C. B.

30th November, 1804.
22, Fludyer Street, Westminster.

Now I am comfortably lodged, my dear brother, my mind more at ease, and things about me that look like home.

I breakfasted to-day with Sir Joseph Banks.

* Curious anticipation! He joined Wilson, in Windmill Street, in 1812.

He is in good style, but has a set of most absurd animals about him—living animals—German and French toad-eaters. There came in presently two old ladies and a respectable, fresh-looking, gouty old gentleman, resembling old Provost Stewart. I took this figure for the knight, and was very angry with myself for coming to put myself in the train of this stupid, unmannerly man—unmannerly, *qua* Sir Joseph, because he did not take any particular observation of me. The old gentleman was a guest like myself, which, when I knew, I saw him through a different medium.

Presently the knight made his appearance—a very kingly figure of an old man with a blazing star upon his breast. He was polite and affable, and received my Infirmary-paper from Dr. G., and sat down and read it before he took his breakfast, and spoke highly of it. I received a general invitation from him.

From Sir Joseph I was carried to Mr. Carlyle, a surgeon of Westminster Hospital. He is a man of some abilities, but having the greatest conceit of himself I ever knew a man to possess. He spoke of "manufacturing their own raw material," and if I had difficulties in Edinburgh, I would have more here. I put him bye. And now I put you bye, to make some notes on what I have seen in the Westminster Hospital. . . . .

I must not omit to tell you that I enjoy excellent health, and live well; by and by, perhaps, too well. By way of termination to

a sauntering walk this forenoon, I called on Lady Headly and Miss Middleton. To the latter I go on Wednesday, to Misses and music. There I may commence many of these female acquaintances which might be agreeable, but I shall have neither money, time, nor mind to bestow upon these parties. Yet when one is weary with other matters, and sickly with the notion of being estranged from the gay world, it may become a relief, you know.

4th December, 1804,
22, Fludyer Street.

DEAR GEORGE,

I was returning from a long walk to Longman's with some threatenings of discontent, when I found the postman at the door with your letter. Writing to you is not become a task; it is a relief and solace, for I have found nothing yet to interest me, or to produce affection.

I have still of my original deposit 37*l.* in the hands of Longman. I have given myself a new hat, coat, and waistcoat. I believe I look primitive and parson-like. On the score of my expenditure, give yourself no uneasiness, for I will let you know long before I can want.

* * * * *

I dined with them (the Longmans) on Saturday. Astley Cooper was there. I dine with him on Thursday. We shall be by ourselves, and, after that, I shall speak of him. On Friday I dined with Dr. Baillie and Dr. Adams, who wrote on poisons—we three.

7th December.

I am just come from Astley Cooper. I offered to make drawings for him. He seemed, and was, I believe, delighted. I am to do so. He asked me to stay all night; he hoped I would live with him while I was making these drawings for him; but I will not. I told him I was too happily situated in my lodgings.

In St. Thomas's and Guy's, they are made up, I believe. They have great resources, and many lecturers; but in this end of the town there is nothing going forward.

Wilson is the successor to Baillie; Baillie, to Dr. Hunter. There is no John Hunter, nor anything in his place. Dr. Hunter's museum is going to Glasgow, and Thomas is giving up his lectures, and has sold his collection: *viz.*, the famous Cruikshank's, to the Emperor of Russia.

Now, this end of the town has always supported the first lecturer. I shall fairly explain myself to the medical men here, and see what can be done.

I am weary of standing alone; and if this does not do, like the Prodigal Son I must throw myself upon my friends again.

13th December, 1804.

My dear Brother,

Nothing has occurred since my last, unless that I have assisted Mr. Lynn at an operation. He stopt, which gave me opportunities of sketching; and for these two days I have been engaged

in my drawings. I think they will be very good.

After Supper.

You see that I have taken my best, because my largest, sheet of paper, that I may have a long confab. with you; and to deceive myself into the notion of conversing with you, I shall take out your last letter. How comes it that, in your kindness, with the idea of making me feel easy in the disagreeableness of my situation, you have praised and flattered me so much, that did I not take it as the kindest mark of your affection, I should be very apt to make a fool of myself? You inquire of me where and how I am situated. Look to the map, and you will see. Fludyer Street is a narrow one, but very respectable. There is written on the corner of the street, "No old-clothes-men or vagrants allowed to enter here!" It opens into the park, and really that is a delightful lounge.

Yesterday I was tired, and tired of the streets too, so I went into the park. The day was delightful; the verdure, the walks, the people, gave a gaiety to the scene; and the sky was, I think, more majestic in the forms of the fleecy clouds than I ever beheld it. There was a mild radiance over the whole that greatly pleased me.

The walk from St. James's, through the Green Park to Piccadilly, is a favourite with me. There is an elegance, an air of fashion, with comfort in the hanging balconies, and in the shrubberies of

the houses, that is next in its effect upon me to a beautiful landscape.

Thus, my dear George, I can pass from the thoroughfare of London to a fairy scene in a few minutes. Now for *home*. Had I passed from you at once into Fludyer Street, it might, perhaps, have appeared cold and desolate. But you must recollect that I had a seasoning in the London Coffee House. I felt like a man who had played his part before a great audience, and was allowed to retire. There is such an exertion to have things done in a tavern or coffee-house, that when you get into lodgings the interested assiduities of an old wife have some soothing effect with them. Thus it is with me. I feel my little comforts, and I like to see and make use of the same things, books, and papers which lay by me in my room at home.

But I must to bed. I hear the watchman calling "One o'clock, and a starlight morning!" I find I do not sleep when I am later, and I have made a resolution not to sit up past one o'clock. So, for the present, adieu.

15th December.

I have received a note this morning from Astley Cooper, begging of me, as a favour, to meet him at St. Thomas's Hospital. I shall, therefore, be engaged all day; and at present I am much hurried. . . . . It seems as if of necessity I will soon become rich in cases of surgery if I have but common industry or

anagement. I make a practice of noting down y observations as the opportunity occurs.

22nd December, 1804.
Friday morning.

My dear George,

You say that you are now satisfied that dinburgh is no place for me, and that you onsider me fixed in London. I cannot, I must onfess, settle this point—I will not say so easily, ut so entirely. I see nothing in all the success hich awaits the most fortunate man here which an compensate for what I have lost in losing our continual counsel, company, and support. am perpetually thus arguing with myself in hatever way I turn. Should these people now o all I wish, all my little comfort and happiness wrecked upon this 'one point of ambition'— s Jeffrey has it.* Indeed I still, in all my anderings of imagination, keep my eye fixed on ome; and the hope is always prevailing that I all be able to collect such information as may ntitle me to return to you with comfort to us oth. Yet you will perceive that I have been nxious to form such arrangements as will enable e to pass with people here as having a great bject in view. Therefore I will not return until have finished my Anatomy of Painting, have dvanced in my Surgery, and have a rich store

* For Francis Jeffrey's affection to George and Charles Bell, see ckburn's Life of Jeffrey.

in pathology; and what may offer before that, it is impossible to say.

I am going to dine with Dr. Baillie to-morrow at Sir William Blizzard's. I met him last night at Mr. Cline's, surgeon and lecturer at St. Thomas's. Cline is the first surgeon in town. . . . . I am very much afraid that I am losing my time in these visits, and I have therefore begun my notes on painting—and *not* till now."

Saturday, After Supper.

I shall go write on the muscles, my dear George; but I cannot resist having some conversation with you. I have been with Sir William Blizzard, but, as you say, I wish I could have my mind occupied with that with which I am engaged.

I went to Sir William's in full puff—was shown into the drawing-room—nobody there. He came, drew in his chair, *as if to say*, "Let us be on no ceremony. How are your complaints to-day?"

"D—— it" (says I, with my very expressive face), "what am I about?" "Ho!" says he, "now I see what has happened. You have made a mistake; but it is a happy one for me. Come, we are just sitting down to dinner; you have taken one Saturday for another; but two are better than one." Says I, "Am I never to come to my senses?—never out of mistakes?" But away we went downstairs, I uttering exclamations, and he felicities; and he introduced me to

his family, Lady Blizzard, and the young ladies. I did not recover directly; I was in a pretty confusion. "Well, Mr. Bell," says he, "are you fond of music?" "Very," says I. "Then we shall presently be made amends for the bad dinner through the favour of the young ladies." You can imagine the rest. I got 'à la Turca' from one of them. These were the days, thought I, that will never return, thinking of poor Strong and his agreeable parties.

Now this visit, of course, made us ten times more intimate than the formal dinner could have done with eighteen or twenty black-coated fellows of doctors—for such will be the party on Saturday three weeks! Now the fault here was not mine, but Astley Cooper's.

29th December, 1804.

* * * * *

I left Sir Joseph Banks, on Thursday, studying my Anatomy of Painting with great spirit. His attention to me is gratifying. I will give it then to Horner, then send it down for your revisal, and then get it up again, and then sell it; and then, I suppose, come down myself!

My dear George, every time I write to you makes me think less and less of this place. Can I forget my friend? Had I been earlier weaned from you, I might have done so. You must now speak freely of my going or staying, *pro* and *con*. Farewell.

CHARLES.

CHAPTER III.

Letters from Home—Lynn's Kind Feeling—Opera—Athenian Club—Benjamin West—Scheme of Lectures—Shakspeare Gallery—Anatomy of Expression—Townley Collection—Sir C. Blicke—Macartney of St. Bartholomew's—Abernethy—Mrs. Billington—Grassini—"Honours for Charlie"—Economy of the Household—Visit to Sydney Smith—House of Commons—"Madness"—Speaker Onslow's House in Leicester Street.

1805.

FROM C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

1st January, 1805.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

The pleasure I receive from your letters is not like that—I suppose—with which a lover receives his mistress' lines. There is no extravagance, no tremor, no great enthusiasm, but there is a calm felicity. I can lay it down, finish what I am about, stir the fire, draw in my great chair, and sit down to read it with a perfect conviction of receiving a consolation to all my little disappointments, if there should happen to be any that morning. This satisfaction I have uniformly received, whether on a new year's morning or no. But I take this anticipation of the day on which I am to receive the letter as a kind of testimony to your affectionate remembrance.

I went with Lynn to-day; first, I with him

across Westminster Bridge, and then he with me to Somerset House. When we had got into the carriage, "Well," says he, "I wanted to speak and to laugh with you. They have got scent of you: they are looking sharp after you. D— it, sir, they think you're going to knock us all out. I told you your reception would not be very cordial. Your book has been seen on Sir Jos. Banks' table; and they think your whole scheme is to be made Professor of Anatomy (in the Academy) in the first instance," &c. &c. Would you believe it, my dear George, that somebody, speaking of me to Lynn, said I "was a sharp, insinuating young man! that he should take care; —that, before he was aware, I would have him out of his hospital!!" Lynn's answer, he said, was—"Well! how the —— will he contrive that? But I tell you, I liked his brother, and I like himself. He is no *humbug*. His conversation is open and free." "Well," says the other, "he'll get to lecture in your hospital, and you will find the consequence." They have here a perfect horror of the shrewdness and perseverance of a Scotchman.

It is now past six o'clock. Five is the post hour. While I am writing, little Sutherland—the go-before of our old corps—has run in and deposited an opera ticket. I'll go. On Saturday, as I told you, Lynn and I went to the opera. I was delighted. The opera was *La Vergine dèl Sole*. The performers,—Grassini, Rovedino,

Viganoni, &c. Had it not been Grassini (in the character of Cora), I should have been disappointed; but as it was, charmed.

The Academy figure comes to me to-morrow, and I have to study and repose a little for him. Indeed, I can say I go to the opera for the same reason.

Wednesday morning.

I was called out of bed this morning to assist Lynn in another operation. It proved serious and uncommon, and I was of essential service to him. I won't take the fee, I am determined. The physician and apothecary saw how much I was master of the subject. On Monday I dined at the Athenian Club, at the Crown and Anchor;—a society of gentlemen, men of great fortune, M.P.'s, rich City merchants, philosophers, and men of literature. John Kemble is a member.

I called on West. He acknowledged that it was he who had been consulted, and that he was favourable to the Anatomy of Painting. He is a stiff, reserved man; but I think I could, if I find it necessary, rub the rust off him—being "an insinuating young man." He bade me come often, and look at his sketches. He gave me a letter to the Secretary of the Academy.

Farewell, my dear brother,

CHARLES.

8th January, 1805.

I must confess, my dear George, that I have had often sleepless nights about the final success

of this expedition of mine. But that is over. My hopes and fears come in less regular succession, and I can now enjoy my sleep and cease to be harassed. I must, however, give you the outline of a conversation with this same good man, Lynn, who I really believe has an affection for me. "Well, sir, they still insist upon your coming to ruin us all," &c. But when the hairdresser was gone, he says: "You must remain here; I see you must. I see you are calculated to be William Hunter amongst us. You may carry every thing before you." Now, my dear George, this the more astonished me, that, formerly, he gave me no encouragement as to any such idea.

The change arose partly, I hope, from knowing me better, and partly from this last operation. I intended no flattery to the patient, nor was I conscious of paying her more regard than this occasion called for,—yet she took strangely to me.

"I hope," says she, when all was over, "you will see me again?" "See you again," says Lynn, "surely; and Mr. Bell will do it also." "Indeed, sir," says she, "it was he I meant." I fancy the physician spoke of me to Lynn, also; and probably this made a revolution in his mind, which, being previously impressed in my favour, has been a considerable comfort to me.

Then Lynn explained to me that there was an intention of selling the whole of Hunter's premises to a manufacturer. "Now," says he, "if we could

get the money, I would buy the house, or have it purchased for you."

So, my dear George, if you can draw upon your banker for 6000*l.*! and lend it to me for ten years, this journey may be more successful than that of the Wronghead family!

I have been very busy these some days. I am doing my sketches in water-colours complete, out-and-out, leaving it for after-determination how they may be engraved.

28th January, 1805.

I have received your letter, my dear brother, of the 22nd and 25th January. You and I perfectly agree. I wish to take, not a house, but rooms—chiefly for the reception of my museum—and teach, not a public class, but something above that, by conversation, and occasional demonstration to those who have attended the other classes. This is the idea I have long dwelt upon as the most compatible with my other pursuits, nature, and acquirements. You are perfectly right in recommending me to keep up my connection with medical men. It is a severe labour of mind and body.

30th January.

This is another plashing day, and I have dedicated it to my Academy figure. I think I have made a step to-day in the way of marginal illustrations. Yesterday I made out my circuit, but found not one at home. In the New Road is the exhibition of the pictures of the German School,

and there I spent an hour very pleasantly. It is impossible to conceive the effect produced by the transition from the Shakspeare Gallery to these rooms—seven in number. In the English artists there is ever the accompaniment of bad drawing and bad colouring. Here, the very room is warm from the reflection of the prevailing colours of the paintings. It would, I think, be a very easy matter to throw a deserved ridicule upon all our own painters, by pointing out their ignorance of anatomy,—contrasting them with other schools and with true sketches. If they ever tempt me, I have it in my power; but though right, it is not wise.

And is your vacation already gone? What will become of the revising of this book of mine?

Friday morning, 31*st January*.

Last night I went to Drury Lane to see a new comedy—"The Honey Moon." Being the first night, the doubts—the suspended judgment of the audience—the applause—gave a strange and distressing interest to the performance. It went off well. It is in imitation of the old dramatists; and the language in many places very beautiful and antique,—but the wit wretched.

Saturday, 11 o'clock, at breakfast.

I came home this morning between two and three o'clock from the Edinburgh Club. There were about fifteen of us, mostly of the Law,—all except Smith (Sydney) and Elmsly, the Grecian. I was terribly annoyed with Greek the whole time

of dinner. Greek is bad enough in itself; but Greek jokes and quaint allusions are too much. Smith, I told you, has my first part of "the Anatomy" at present. Every one, he says, who has seen the drawings, is delighted. He has received much pleasure, and has been much entertained. But, what do you think?—he proposes that I should put it into the hands of a literary hack to brush away the Scotticisms!! He further tells me that Mrs. Smith has read it, and marked several Scotticisms. Be this as it may, he is to return it, I believe, with a letter.

Do you recollect that you have a fasciculus of it lying beside you on the connection of Poetry? Don't, however, trouble yourself about it. I am a little mortified about these Scotticisms

12th February.

Until your books arrive I am reading Horace. The Ars Poetica is more worthy of the annotations of a painter than Du Fresnoy's Art of Painting. I am going to morrow to see the late Mr. Townley's collection of antique statues. They are the finest out of Italy. He is just dead. I had an interest in him as a man of taste, and hoped he should have recovered. Fires are ordered, and the rooms to be warmed by one o'clock. Hem! you will see some symptoms of what I must inevitably become in matters of taste and the fine arts—a puppy; for they, that is some silly people, take it as an additional advantage to have my company to see paintings!

This forces me to attend to the subject; and so if you find any books connected with this, recommend them to me.

Monday.

I am just returned from surveying the Townley collection of antique statues. They are truly superb—a noble collection! and in the next street, which I can assure you is a great matter. I observe that all the ancients did not equally excel in a knowledge of anatomy; that there is not always preserved an augustness or grandeur and simplicity; that there is often a natural expression. In short, I will find it very useful to me; and, as I have applied for leave to copy, I shall make much of them, both in characterising the passions and in drawing the figure. This, I think, will naturally give a greater show of elegance and finishing to my work . . . . My next trip in this seat of arts is to Bacon the statuary's gallery. But this is expensive. I am, as I was saying, a puppy, and give the attendants too much money. The Academy figure, too, is a regular call,—and these tavern dinners! I have still fifteen guineas. Is this being saucy?

I am quite in hysterics about these statues! I said to-day of some of them I must make a drawing to send it to you. There is one most striking head, *Adonis in Infernis*. The form of the face is beautiful; the drapery of the dead clings beautifully about the breast, neck, and chin; and the expression, the wanness of death

—which you will say is an absurd expression when there is no colour, only form. It smiles in death. Now this is but a piece which might be overlooked in many finer things—heads, groups, and single statues. For one he refused 15,000*l.* from a banker in the City.

Tell me in your next whether Horace's Four Ages is not better than Shakspeare's Seven. See Ars Poetica, 156. "Ætatis cujusque notandi sunt tibi mores."

I have been thinking much about my book of painting. I shall be much bolder; carry it further, and consequently be longer of finishing it than I at first intended. I must read and think more for my introduction than I thought would be necessary.

7th March, 1805.

Well, my dear brother, to-morrow certainly I shall have a letter! To-day I took a long walk into the City, far and farther than I can tell. I found myself at last near the India House. I was seeking Sir Charles Blicke, one of the surgeons in St. Bartholomew's; missed him, left my card; and this trouble I was induced to take from his politeness when I met him in the hospital. I meant to say, "Sir Charles, I am come to study from men, having made the most I can of books, and I am going to take the freedom of attending all your operations."

Longman made me an offer of 300*l.* for two 8vo. vols. introductory to surgery. Now, my

dear George, if—as I am afraid—I have led you into difficulties, this may at once extricate us, and be pretty well, and therefore I communicate it with pleasure . . . . It is no small object with me to have my book on painting elegantly "got up," for without this, after all my labour, it would be nothing.

Lynn still says he will not part with me, nor let me return to Scotland.

18*th March*, 1805.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

* * * * *

Yesterday forenoon, Macartney, the lecturer of St. Bartholomew's on Comparative Anatomy, sat a long time with me. He is going to publish a little book on the arteries, which will not help the sale of mine; but, notwithstanding, I am going to assist him (by drawings).

Abernethy called an hour ago, and I had some professional talk with him. Our conversation was very amusing. He came to invite me to dinner with a party of medical friends; so if this kind of life be consolation to you, you see I am returning to the gaiety of London. He says that if I remain in London, the Academy must appoint me to the chair of Anatomy. I told him my real sentiment, which was, that if I had all the merit of Mic. Angelo, they would not.

No time but to assure you of my continued and if possible increasing affection.

C. B.

20th March.

My dear George,

As I go to-morrow forenoon to St. Bartholomew's by appointment with Sir C. Blicke, I cannot go to the collection of statues. In the evening, I see Cooke as Richard announced; I have long wished to see his ugly face for my book.

Last night I went to the Opera; we were in a box. I did not know the name of the opera, and could not hear or understand a single word. It was Mrs. *Billington's* night, and not Grassini; they are constellations which do not appear at once. The dancing was very fine, the house full and brilliant, and I was much pleased. In coming out, you find yourself squeezed up with duchesses and countesses, and all the beauty of the town. I hear the girls whispering, "This is the best of it." It is only Signora Grassini who conveys the idea of the united power of music and action. She dies not only without being ridiculous, but with an effect equal to Mrs. Siddons. The "O Dio!" of Mrs. Billington is a bar of music, but in the strange, almost unnatural voice of Grassini, it goes to your soul.

23rd.

I am just returned from witnessing an operation. . . . . I cannot bring my mind to leave surgery in the state it is now practised . . . . yet, being bound to certain rules, a *spectator* merely, it was torture to me.

Wednesday.

My dear Brother,

I have been to-day in Townley House, and I have made a selection of what will serve my purpose: 1st., an old Silenus, lying with the breast, armpit, &c., shown. Of this I will make a nice drawing, and then anatomise it with remarks, and so on of the rest of the body. I have also fixed on a curious inveterate ugly Roman face and neck, to show the masses of the muscles of the face, and some little bas-reliefs for titles, tail-pieces, &c.—for example, Medusa's head, &c. You will see that I have every thing to do, but the drawings are easily made—the matter is either in my head or in my notes.

* * * * *

You may tell auntie that Lynn values me upon calculation at 10,000*l.*, and positively I must have nothing less. I think it's thereabouts myself! But I am taking up my paper with nonsense.

3rd April.

I went on Monday to St. Bartholomew's Hospital dinner.

Sir C. Blicke paid me every possible honour and civility, and at dinner placed me in the centre of the surgeons of the hospital, between himself and Sir J. Earle. The situation was so particular that the Lord Mayor, the president, drank to me individually among a hundred at dinner. Great honours for Charlie, who sat

pining that he had not an eligible permanent situation among them. The hall or dining room is half the extent of one of the wings: very lofty and magnificent. The company ranged in incredible length; the sun shining in by the upper range of windows; and after every toast a song from professional singers filling the whole expanse. Have you me? It was novel and interesting to me.

Thursday.

I have finished my model of the hand, and think it very good. I am just waiting the opportunity of casting an arm to model a very curious instance of disease.

10*th April*, 1805.

I was on Sunday at Lynn's cottage, and today! Very idle, you will say; but I have found the way of taking a book and paper with me. Lynn works hard in the garden from two to five o'clock, and I write or read, and we join at five to dinner. We can now take a stroll after, round the paddock, and see the setting sun, which always recalls kindred scenes and past years. I would here give you a passage from Cowper, but I have sent it up to an old lady who inhabits the attics. . . . .

Farewell, my dear George,

C. B.

19*th April*, 1805.

The Deil's in it, my dear George, if I don't answer you this time, for I take it hot and hot.

I was diverted with your writing that Craven Street was dark and dismal. Fludyer Street is more retired, and darker; a carriage cannot turn in it. Notwithstanding this, no one need be ashamed of having Fludyer Street on his visiting card. In my last lodging, now Lady F. C. lodges. I have opposite to me, at this present, the large black eyes of a Creole (princess, for any thing I know). Can it be supposed, then, that I should complain of the narrowness of the street? And some days ago she had a companion, fair, and very beautiful. This is my *prospect*. In short, the street is respectable and genteel, and in my apprehension, just such a one as I ought to be in. Take the proof of the equipages before my window, and it is above my style. But the truth must be told. "Coal-merchant" is on the door; and outside of my chamber-door I sometimes hear the noise of children. I have a light closet behind—for plaster work—a good bedroom, a bed which might answer to that of Dido, and a parlour with three windows in front. It is the drawing-room of the house, on the first floor, viz., the second. The people live very decently. The only other person in the house is an old lady, formerly of some distinction, now reduced, who vegetates upstairs, and never leaves her room. I live by the attention of the maid,—a staid, decent sort of person, who provides for me well, and dresses nicely. What she provides:—steaks, veal, pigeon-pie, rabbits, fowls, regularly a new-laid

egg to supper, ham, cheese, &c. I receive nobody within my door to eat but Lynn. Now, my dear brother, I know you have not one definite idea, nor is it possible to convey to you any accurate notion, of my situation and life. The Scotch gentleman is thought to be a great doctor. As to establishing my title to any openings, I have the vanity to think I am already prepared. But that the most transcendent merit will usher a man into situations of importance, is not my belief. As to the execution of the plan of morbid anatomy, you cannot conceive the difficulty.

22nd.

I have been, I know not how, more satisfactorily engaged these some days than usual,—drawing, modelling, writing, but all a little only. . . . . I called to-night on Mrs. Sydney Smith; and, tho' I hoped late enough, found them at their wine,—Mr. and Mrs. Smith and a very beautiful and fashionable-looking young lady. Sydney Smith was obliged to go and preach. I preferred staying with the ladies, in consequence of your repeated preaching to me. . . . We got on very well; we went up to the drawing-room; and if you had seen me sitting on a low stool betwixt them, blowing the fire with the bellows, you would say, at least, I was getting very easy and familiar. You see I scratch away, not much minding whether you can read or not. So much for a tea-visit. Only allow me to say, that once I could not help thinking how sweet a temper

brother George would have been in, if, on receiving company, auntie and he should be obliged to take the bellows in hand. I'll venture to say the bellows were never handled so gracefully as by this young lady.

4th May, 1805.

Yesterday I bustled in amongst the electors of Westminster, to hear Fox's address against Melville. I should have deeply felt the degradation if I had been obliged to address such a set of ragamuffins—paltry creatures, such as you have seen attendant on punchinello. His speech was not good in effect, tho' in manner and expression admirably well adapted to the hearers. He had the same slips of words, and returning to correct his expressions, as you must recollect; energetic and plausible, from an argumentative manner. But there was on no occasion loud or long applause. The speech, word for word, is in the *Morning Herald*. Indeed, the whole, I must conceive, has been intended for the newspapers. The people were very indifferent, and took it as a good joke to hear Fox speak. The Opposition have betrayed so much heat on the present occasion, that their motives are suspected, and therefore now affect the people's minds less.

* * * * *

I really cannot do here without more money than your funds can supply. I see incalculable occasions of expense in establishing myself, but no other obstructions,—which just makes it the

more unfortunate. But I am satisfied. Disappointment arising from situation or finances never affects me—things for which we cannot blame ourselves.

13th May.

I know not what to think of this load—absolutely an oppression of business—which you have got! Is there now to be no intermission? I have a letter from Robert, speculative and curious. He seems rather to incline that I should come down to you again. So does the better part of me; all those warmer feelings which we say come from the heart, prompt me to return, and only some cold speculative thoughts make me pause. I'll tell you what I have observed in my composition: I am sure you will say I am right. I can make a few good friends, but cannot engage the multitude.

My books are doing well. Horner says he is very anxious for the remainder of your volume.

The case in which I assisted Lynn has turned out a very interesting one—worth the coming to see. It has run through all possible changes; and the man now, after a month, will die.

I have, within the last few days, read the whole of the Æneid, and have scored some beautiful passages.

15th May.

I think Abernethy has taken a kind of hankering kindness to me. Yesterday he called, and I chased him from chair to stool round the room in

way of argument. To-day I dined with him, walked through the new square after dinner, and after tea, we came foot for foot into Parliament-street—no little way. Now this is fully equal to being under the same umbrella with him. I have been entreating him to go to a dance with me to-morrow. "No," says he, "they make such a quizz of me." He was invited, and I hope will go; so, at least, I will not be the greatest oddity there.

I have made some drawings for Macartney, who writes some little *thing* upon the arteries. I wish to oblige people, and to have it said that I *am* willing to give them the assistance of my labours. And the odd thing is, that I draw better for him than for myself! Generous creature!

Adieu, my dear brother,

C. B.

6th June, 1805.

My dear George,

I find great treasures in Spenser's "Fairy Queen." I must have *Madness* incorporated in my book. It strikes me that something good may be said upon it. I have made a drawing of moody madness—a crouching, whole figure. Of all the books I have read, Spenser has the finest subjects for the pencil.

A Royal Institution is forming in the City. In a few days 60,000*l.* was subscribed; and it would have gone on to an immense amount, but that

the books were shut. There pervades the City a languor and distrust; business is much at a stand. The enemy's fleet being out, makes them demur and hesitate; and the affair of Melville, and the general notion that in the army department there will be horrible mis-management, have affected the sombre minds of the City folk.

I have found out that I can model in clay, and work it up as my *base* without casting in plaster of Paris, which is a great facility to me, and saving of expense.

It now draws near the time of our meeting. I wonder what you will think of my quarters?

24th June.

Tell me if this man be mad enough (sketch of madness, for the Anatomy of Expression, enclosed). It is the first proof; I expect greatly to mend it. The idea I give of madness is, that it is a mixed expression,—a fierceness united to terror,—and, like that of a brute, takes its origin in apprehension. The history of madness supports this idea. The general character—sooty-black, stiff, bushy hair,—large deep-coloured veins, muscular, rigid,—his skin bound,—his features sharp,—his eyes sunk: his body is shrunk together as if afraid, but there is a defect—a want of wildness in the eyes of this figure. This will be given by showing a little of the white above the iris. I was almost angry, after drawing this figure, to find that Fuseli had given one almost the same

in Lavater's Physiognomy. Look to it, and tell me if mine be better.

I went on Thursday to the House of Commons. I was there from nine o'clock in the morning, till Friday morning past two o'clock. I was sorry that it had not rather been you. I think you would have profited by hearing the several speakers, and acquire confidence and manner; for good sense in plain language, in simple words, in which by emphasis and action there is energy, is infinitely superior to that brilliant management of the expression, the luxuriance and richness of language, which I think your young men aim at. Two words for one, though it help out the rhythm of the oration, weakens the impression. I heard Pitt, Fox, Wyndham, Attorney-General,—saw a little of Sheridan's manner,—heard Grey, Whitbread, &c. After them all, when one is satisfied with the brilliancy, I can conceive such a man as John Clark to be heard with deep attention,—so superior is plain expression to ornament. I conceive that, in a long speech, the orator should speak for himself in the beginning, display his ornament in the exordium; but not expect that people can bear tinsel after an hour's speaking. Thus, having a headache from three long monotonous speeches, Fox's *manner*, by giving a new stimulus, cured me. His manner is that of a man who has more within him than he can give utterance to, or find words to express. In those parts of his speech where there is point, he seems to

have studied,—studied the expression and words,—and leaves the rest to the feelings of the moment.

I am to receive Baptiste Porta, on the Expression of Animals, which I expect to open a new field to me.

C. B.

1st July, 1805.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I spent a *pleasant morning* in Bedlam on Saturday: the result will be forthcoming. I dine to-morrow with all the renowned surgeons of London,—Inspecting Surgeon, Surgeon-general, Cline, Ford, &c. I know all their characters now perfectly. I wish you had been with me yesterday. When I was coming away from Lynn's cottage, I saw smoke rising from the trees on the common, which I saw to be an encampment of gipsies. I was resolved not to miss the sight. I found the old ones, with their feet to the fire, hurtling together, a blanket only put up between them and the wind; the young ones in the more *perfect* tents (being open only at one end)—a blanket thrown over bending twigs. Looking into one of them, I saw something move. "Holla!" says I, "how many have we here?" "Two," says a little wretch, pushing its black head from under the clouts; and clearing its black, sparkling eyes, it asked what o'clock it was (it was a beautiful twilight). "Time you were up," says I, "don't you see the sun is just

about to rise?" by which time another pair of eyes reflected the ruddy western sky. It was a strong example of independence, and a strange contrast with the life that is led here.

Were it not for the garbage and offal I have to sort, I would make a drawing of the scene,—old men and women, young girls, children, and asses' colts, sitting under a rugged tree, "the mossy branches of an oak, half dead," and the wild heath before them—*time*, evening hour! . . .

I have my observations in Bedlam to comprise into a sentence or two; a mad, laughing "wife" to draw (if I can). I am reading Locke on the Human Understanding, by which you may see that I am making a slow progression *back*wards. I wish to make a philosophical and methodical introduction to my Passions. I have got a curious old book on the muscles of the affections. Baptiste Porta on Animals, which is nonsense. From all this, you may conjecture how I am employed. I shall write again. Adieu.

C. B.

5th July.

My dear George,

I have this moment received your letter. I am anxious that you should stay for Mrs. Siddons, because she must be very great, and because there is really nothing of the kind to be heard here. Mrs. Siddons only acted here twice; I saw her once: you will find her as great as ever.

I think you are wrong about my madman; the

body is muscular, and I think rigid, but not fat. But I am afraid there is more in it than this. I drew it on a theory, and I can find nothing like it in the cells of the madhouses. I mean to say so, and to show in what it is not mad. It is in the thoughtfulness of the brow, and I think in the action of the muscles, which I hope to prove are never in action when the mind is destroyed. I have made an observation,—I call it a discovery,—in studying the lions and tigers, that has greatly delighted me. These animals want the orbicular muscle of the mouth, and the corrugator of the eyebrows. Their rage is the wide-drawn lips, and the eyes starting from the sockets. So it is in violent bodily pain and brutal rage in man. But when there is anguish of mind, some mental operation mixed with the passion, there is knitting of the eyebrows, and the peculiar conformation of the lips from the orbicular muscle—muscles which the animals have not. In looking to the madmen, I was astonished at the smoothness of the brow. I think that the observation will go even so far, that when the mind is quite gone, these muscles lose their action. I mean to give a plate of the lion and tiger's head in repose and rage, and with it, the expression of woe and rage in man. I have made an introduction on the passions, which I think you will like, and am engaged in remarks on the beauty of the human figure, which I think *beautifully* resolves it with expression.

I have not been able yet to find Alison's book.

In short, the subject everywhere admits and requires theory and reasoning, for our ideas are only obscured by use and wont. The book wanted theory, and it will now have it; it was insulated remarks. We shall be able to combine it in system, and then it will admit being talked of. If my sketches are true, my theory will not alter them.

I am glad Mrs. Siddons is to see the book. I tried in vain to convey an idea of her expression.

I dine to-day with Longman,—all Scotch,—Horner, Brougham, Allan, S. Smith, Abernethy. Nobody will interfere with my language!

This letter wants the tail. Adieu.

C. BELL.

July, 1805.

In George's memoranda is the following note:—'Went to visit Charles; found him in comfortable lodgings, 10, Fludyer Street. We had much conversation, but at last agreed that it was wise for him to remain in London.

* * * * *

We wandered much about, looking for a fit house, and at last fixed on Speaker Onslow's, in Leicester Street, Leicester Square.

This was a time of great anxiety for us both, yet we thought it impossible that together we should not be able to manage the rent of the house, and what might be necessary for its establishment.'

24th September, 1805.
Fludyer Street.

My dear Brother,

I did not choose to write to you till I had this matter of the house settled, and I have this morning signed an agreement. You now see me, then, a householder in London. What delayed us, was my taking Scofield to see the house. He talked in a way which I now see was extravagant. He frightened me about the roof, especially speaking of some hundreds being necessary for it. I therefore got a man to give me a letter saying at what rate he would hold it in repair. He agreed for 5*l.* yearly for three years, and for nine, 20*l.*, to put it in complete repair, and keep it so for 3*l.* a-year.

Abernethy was with me to-day, and we talked a great deal pretty openly; he renewed his protestations of regard, &c., and I told him it was pleasant to have that understanding with each other. I dine with him on Thursday with some foolish lord.

C. B.

30th September.

My dear George,

I have set the painters to my door, and have ordered a cast-iron rail and door to inclose it—(the doorway stone-colour, and the wood ash or oak-colour, with a green-bronzed knocker). I have this morning engaged a boy for 6*l.* 6*s.*

a-year, giving him a coat and hat. Shall it be a green frock, and hat with a silver band?

The classes are all beginning to-day, and I have only my door painted! That's hard. Don't send anything more by the mail till I think and feel what I want. What surgical books you can collect, I expect by the first ship.

12th October.

I have been putting up my books, having got all the boxes as safe as possible to convey them, for I saw them unloaded, carted, packed, &c., from the beginning to their final deposit. The packages with the preparations I have not opened. It is a harassing business, and I had sufficient experience of it to make me regret the toil *you* must have had. I am very well pleased with my rooms.

Farewell, my dear brother. Nothing I do but has some reference, immediate or remote, to you.

C. B.

16th.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have got Buchan with me this morning, and accordingly I have a second arrival of things for my museum. He comes apparently with proper feelings, and I have a very sensible letter from his father, so that affair rests well, I hope. I have got all my things safe. To-morrow I shall begin to write in Leicester Street, and set Buchan to cleaning and varnishing.

I have a letter, dated Halifax, from Horner, recommending John Eyre to my attention, and to be my pupil. You know Eyre? He was much with the set of Horner and Brougham, and reviewed some things.

Unless you have packed the hippopotamus's head, do not send it—it is of no use; nor the large model on the board. I have been very unhappy with this toil you have undergone at this enormous expense. I am very sorry to find John * still so extravagant. Buchan tells me of his preparations for his marriage—the fitting up of the house like a palace, &c.

It is growing dark, and as my little man is displacing my papers for dinner, I must hurry to a conclusion. In faith the tears came when I thought of your anxiety and trouble in these matters; and had I less occasion to be proud, your affection will be sufficient cause for my arrogance. N.B.—This I scarcely expect to be intelligible to you.

I have a strong impression that my lectures will succeed.

25th October, 1805.

LEICESTER STREET.

Mark that, my dear brother, where I have been for three days. I am now waiting while my little boy is getting breakfast. Buchan in the further room working at his preparations, and the joiners putting up my cases; so farewell to

* His elder brother.

idleness. The room in which I sit is very genteelly set forth, I can assure you. The day before yesterday I got an admirable piece of beef —it was brought in at five o'clock, in fine style, with vegetables, &c. Yesterday I dined out, and my lads dined off it with a hot beefsteak. Who are my lads? They are Charles Cheyne, Buchan, and my boy *Will*. Besides, I have an old woman (busy at this moment) who does up the rooms in the morning, and has her breakfast.

28th October.

My dear Brother,

I have put up as much manuscript as, with the injuries to the head, will complete my 160 pages. You cannot conceive how I regret this incessant trouble which I give you, but I hope that you will be able to read a few pages, and send them to be transcribed—perhaps some of this does not need transcribing? I'll make additions to the Introduction, and am happy that you like it. I shall send you a preface and the head in my next.

I vaunted of my money! but when all in Fludyer Street was paid—the barber and Betty, I came here with 12*l*. That will keep me a fortnight, at which time I would like to have my MS., and receive money for it.

My two cases are already filled with preparations, newly varnished, with papers behind the glass. Every moment of my time is occupied, and occupied variously, so that it is not harassing.

Charles Cheyne assists. He is as good as his father—with more ability.

15th November, 1805.

* * * * *

Nothing gives me any anxiety here but the fear that I may not be able to support the expense, for I am comfortable (though still in the midst of confusion it has an apology and a reason in it). I am happy with my lads, and they are, I think, strongly attached to my interests. I'll send my auntie a present of Buchan's book of family expenses, which will show her all the odds and ends and means of spending money.

But I sat down to tell you that I must certainly go down to see these wounded men,* and I first wait to find whether Portsmouth or Plymouth be the general rendezvous. Lynn and I go together. He wishes to pay my expenses, but I will not suffer it. I don't care if, in the end, I have a part of my rooms with the models of the wounded in Nelson and Strahan's fleets.

Our illuminations were shabby beyond conception for such a victory. I admired most an old wife tending one candle with 'Glory to old England' written on the window. With the marrow-bones and cleavers I was well pleased; they chime upon them like bells ringing the changes.

I keep myself busy writing among all my confusion. We are now preparing dinner here for

* The wounded at Trafalgar.

the first time, and the good new pan (10*s.* 6*d.*) has a hole in the bottom. You would be both gratified and diverted to see us sometimes.

20th.

The bricklayers, &c., are still about me, and hold me in confusion; yet my sitting-room is very comfortable. I come in and find my boys sitting in comfort—the one reading, and the other varnishing.

I had a visit just now from Dr. Maton.* He had some conversation with Sir Joseph Banks about my paper. He said the baronet has himself attended to the subject, and thinks it highly important; but I think I will not be able to let it be read, since it would delay my publication till May. I am going to give it to Maton to give to the old knight.

I was at the play last night with the Lynns, in Mrs. Garrick's private box; saw the "Cabinet," and thought of you and myself four years ago in the pit.

I have not yet heard of the arrival of the wounded. I am afraid they will be sent to Plymouth—300 miles!

Adieu, my own dear George.

C. B.

26th November.

I have never been so long without a letter, my dear George, as before receiving yours yesterday.

* Physician to Queen Charlotte.

My hands were covered with clay all day, until I found myself too late to write, having to dress for the play too; Lynn insisted on my going.

He has given up the idea of going to see the wounded; and if I go, I must now do it alone. Plymouth, my dear George, is 300 miles off: Portsmouth but a little way comparatively. I should have gone to Plymouth for Nelson's fleet, but it was too great a sacrifice for Strahan's. Now I am afraid the wounds must have lost all peculiar character, if they should come now; but the people in the hurt and sick office don't know when to expect them.

A great many young men have been inquiring to-day about my terms.

30th.

Things are going on so much as I have already described to you, that my aunt must begin again to say that I write the same thing again and again. I write this at a time when you would pack me off to bed—my boy asleep, my gentlemen gone to their quarters, and I weary of writing about amputation.

I have this moment received Jeffrey's letter and drawings. Assure him that I shall immediately set about it.* This night, after supper, it will be

* A posthumous sketch of Mrs. Jeffrey, to whom both brothers were much attached. Francis Jeffrey, in writing to Francis Horner, says, "I cannot bear to talk of what engrosses all my thoughts. . . . . I have never shed a tear in the sight of any male being but George J. Bell, whom I have known from my infancy, and who was acquainted with my poor Kitty for years before we were married."

my business to endeavour to make something of them. I was astonished to see a scratch I made at St. Andrews. I thought we had all condemned and torn it, but to me it conveys the most lively recollection—tho' bad.

You must suppose, from my hurry, that I am selfishly employed, when the fact is I do nothing without thinking what would be your opinion—nor of success or discomfort but as it may enable me to enjoy your company or distress you.

C. B.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST LECTURES IN LONDON.

First Lectures—Lectures to Artists—The Invisible Girl—Poor Rates—Vauxhall with Abernethy—Tom Campbell—Princess Elizabeth and the Gardener—Lord Melville's Trial—Jeffrey and Moore—George's Marriage.

1806.

20th January, 1806.

DEAR BROTHER,

I sit down to write to you pretty late on Saturday night. It has been a strange perturbed evening; it leaves me with nothing to complain of, yet not elated. But let me speak to you in detail.

The night came on with a perfect hurricane, the rain pouring down so that no wise man would think of putting out his head. This augured ill in my bosom. Six o'clock approached, and only a few straggling creatures; this put me in great anxiety. Just as I was passing, Lynn came in staggering, and to my astonishment in tears, and with a hysterical sobbing. I took him in my arms to the sofa. At first, knowing the man well, I thought Mrs. Lynn must be dead, or something horrible had occurred; when he was able to speak he assured me nothing of this kind

had happened. Then I thought he must have found matters very bad in the lecture-room, but I believe it was the reverse—the man's anxiety, haste, and the lighted room, had produced the effect. It was an instance of friendship which I must never forget. I found about forty in the room; my disappointment, I must confess, was extreme. The lecture, I believe, went off well, or the people about me are most affectionate liars. Indeed, my dear George, it is a great satisfaction to me to find those who know me, so much interested for me. As yet only three pupils have entered their names.

Monday evening.

This, my dear George, is after my second lecture. They meet with much approbation, but I am not destined yet to see an end to my anxieties and disappointment. There were only twelve pupils, nay, I should say attendants; the day has only produced 10*l.* My greatest difficulty is in conveying this information to you. I regard my success only as I see it influences your happiness, and I see you anxious about me, and thinking me despondent and unhappy, when it really is not the case. I have labour, that is occupation. I have a few very kind fellows about me; I have not only their kind wishes but their respect, and the three months will, I hope, pass over very pleasantly, and be attended with an increase of reputation. I am certainly not like a melancholy

man, full of matter, for I have the utmost difficulty in filling my paper.

Now do not repine and be angry with me and yourself for this experiment. Give me a little time to try what energy will do; let us persevere and not expect miracles. I say again, that I have so much satisfaction from those who know me that my want of success with the public should not bear hard on my spirits.

Believe me, my dear George,

Yours, C. B.

4th February, 1806.

My dear George,

I have not sat down thus unperturbed to write to you for long. Tell Jeffrey that I am exceedingly obliged to him for the long letter by Richardson,* and for the kind things he says of you. Richardson came up a melancholy figure: he is like a fish out of the water.

The reason of my being so idle to-night—think of that when I am writing to you—is, that to-morrow I lecture to my painters, and I shall give them my introduction in toto, as an introductory lecture. Next day is Sunday. On Monday I have a good lecture, I know, so I am easy and cheerful.

My pleasure and gratitude is great on receiving your volume of cases.† I have received

* See "Lord Cockburn's Life of Jeffrey," p. 170.

† John having refused to part with Charles's case-books and sketches, George occupied the few leisure hours he could spare from his own professional labours in copying them—the drawings as well as the manuscripts.

them all: they will make me easy and rich. I am astonished with the accuracy of some of your sketches of my own drawings.

I got yesterday the skull of a Roman, with an obolus in his mouth, and a very curious diseased bone belonging to the same skeleton. I have other preparations in promise from another surgeon in town. I shall soon be universally known, and my museum will increase rapidly.

Five o'clock.

I delivered my lecture to my painters, with which they were well pleased. I gave it them roundly—more wish to join.

8*th*.

I have finished the bones to-day; I begin the strict anatomy to-morrow. So confident am I that I shall make a good lecture, that I am quite at my ease, and was just about to read a foolish book, of which I have not been guilty for a long time, but perhaps I should rather be employed in making some sketches for my painters to-morrow night. On Wednesday evening I gave them a general view of the system of a limb, bone, muscle, tendon, of arteries and veins. This is excellent exercise for me. They stand with open mouth, seeming greatly delighted. There were originally six came to me; they gave me 10*l*. 10*s*., and pay all expenses, but they requested me to admit more, and I have twelve at two guineas a-piece. It is agreeable labour.

My surgical pupils have brought me 82*l.*: my painters will give me 25*l.* A very little further success, and two classes in the year, will be something considerable.

JACKQUIN'S HOTEL, LEICESTER SQUARE.

Dining with Richardson on French dishes, the play in the evening, because you said it must be so in the end of the week.

Nothing, my dear George, could give you more satisfaction than to see me—to-day for example—in the midst of my students. Below there were anatomical and surgical pupils at work, and I in the midst of them. In my great room seven painters, with each their little table, drawing from the skulls and skeletons. Then came my public lecture, and then idleness, heightened by the labours of the week *well* performed.

Tell me how auntie is, &c.

CH^{s}. BELL.

11*th February*, 1806.

DEAR GEORGE,

Although I have very little time, yet I think I should write a few lines, were it only to say that I am alive and merry. On Wednesday evening I gave a lecture to the painters, on the muscles of the trunk—better than that when we walked in the Park. The audience was highly delighted, either with what I said or what I showed them. To-night I hope to please them again, but I have still to compose it. I have a most excellent

living figure and admirable subject; these, with the skeletons, my elegant rooms, lamps, &c., make altogether an imposing enough exhibition. Every one agrees that I have such encouragement that I'll be forced to persevere in this course. I'll give another in the beginning of summer, *i. e.*, when I have finished my course, anatomical and surgical.

Tell my dear auntie that I received my first fee in consultation yesterday; it was to determine whether an inflamed eye, which was under Ware, the famous oculist, should go to Pearson. I gave it decidedly to go to Pearson; but it seems that the patient, a lawyer, was so far pleased with me that he sent for *me* in preference. *Thus good begins.*

Do not, my dear George, think these scrambling letters betray want of affection. Until three o'clock on Saturday I am in a perpetual hurry from one thing and another, and *I like it!* I am wearying to see auntie. Adieu.

C. B.

A few remarks written on the margin of Pettigrew's "Memoir of Sir Charles Bell," many years later, refer to this period of his life, and give a curious picture of his feelings on settling in London.

Pettigrew says, "In the year 1806" (it ought to be 1804), "Mr. Bell left Edinburgh for the wider and more liberal field of exertion presented

by the metropolis." Opposite to this passage Charles Bell wrote:—

Coming to London with the resolution to fix myself here was certainly a desperate measure, for I had formed no friends, and absolutely did not know a human creature. When I consider the few introductions I had—to men who could be of no assistance to me—I look back with something like a renewal of the despair I then felt. My first object was to introduce myself to the several schools, with the expectation of being taken as an assistant by one or other of the chief teachers. Cline and Cooper were lecturing in the Borough; Abernethy, with his assistant Macartney, in St. Bartholomew's; Sir Wm. Blizard and Mr. Headington, in the London Hospital; and Mr. Wilson in Windmill Street, in the school of the Hunters.

I could see that a great deal was to be done, but where to find a resting-place? How show my capacity for teaching or illustrating my profession?

These days of unhappiness and suffering tended greatly to fortify me, so that nothing afterwards could come amiss, nothing but death could bring me to a condition of suffering such as I then endured. There was a little romance with it too. I found myself so cut off from the society I should have wished to cultivate, and which I thought I deserved; and so alone in the world, that I entertained myself with fancies as to what

set of people, and what family, and what place, it was likely Providence was to unite me to.

In short, I believe I was as romantic as any young man could be, although the prevailing cast of my mind was to gain better celebrity and independence by science; and perhaps this was the most extravagant fancy of all.

I never thoroughly hated London while I could lose myself in it. I had a pleasure in wandering through streets I did not know; but at last it appeared to me to consist of insignificant parts almost infinitely multiplied.

I was not idle, however, all this time. I had a subject of study always with me. I was preparing my Anatomy of Expression, and made some anatomical studies in the Westminster Hospital.

I could not help regretting the noble fields that were everywhere around me for exertion in my profession, and which I found closed against me.

One night I resolved to return to Edinburgh. I went to the Opera, to leave the last pleasant impression of London. I could dwell upon my feelings of that night, but few could sympathize with them—and next morning I resolved to remain in London. I took a large ruinous house in Leicester Square, formerly inhabited by Speaker Onslow. When I went with my surveyor to examine it, I was somewhat appalled by his account; he was a great John Bull rough fellow. Leaning out of the window, and observing the walls out of their perpendicular, he said in a coarse, familiar manner, "Sir,

you had better have nine bastard children than this house over your head."

In taking this step I was conscious I must withdraw myself from such society as I could have loved, and here I gave myself up exclusively to the teaching of anatomy. Such were my miscalculations, that my expectations of a large class were sadly disappointed—it was years before I had forty pupils to lecture to.

When I had got into this house, the first night I slept in it I had put out the candle, and was leaping into bed, when the floor gave way under my foot, and I found I had displaced the board. On examining this in the morning, I discovered a tube under the loose board—it was the house where the Invisible Girl *exhibited!*

A man brought up as I had been in Scotland, has certain notions of respectability, which are very strong and very peculiar. I don't know that at any time I was more depressed than when I found the sort of house I had got possession of; but it was one of those absurd errors into which a stranger in London falls. Before taking it, I had been provoked with the opinion of everybody I consulted about my plans, their lowest estimate being that of 10,000*l.* to set me a-going. Even yet I am not rich enough to boast of my poverty.

FROM C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

7th April, 1806.

My dear Brother,

I interrupt my jottings for my lecture on

Monday to write to you; a great source of my satisfaction.

It is a curious thing to see our old boyish acquaintances getting places in the Ministry. Horner's office, I am told, is worth 1500*l.* a-year. Brougham, I understand, is to be made private secretary to Fox; but this may be Edinburgh news, for any thing I know.

You, my dear George, do not understand the high and independent ground on which you stand. One really does not see his own situation. Yours is observed, believe me, and envied too.

For to-morrow this is my *note*: "After breakfast, to see a patient at Brompton Row, a mile beyond the end of Piccadilly: come home and study for my lecture: after lecture, visit three patients: dine near six: after dinner, prepare for my evening lecture:" and in the evening I'll probably have to go to Brompton again. And thus I roll on.

On Monday I got an alarm about my poor-rates. A man came in with a queer look. I only ventured to ask how much I was rated at. He said, "96*l.*" "Why," says I, "you may as well put me out of the house at once." Richardson could do nothing about it, so I sent my old friend Grant; and very happy was I to find it reduced to 2*l.* 16*s.* the quarter.*

* He fancied he had to *pay* 96*l.* the quarter for poor-rate! Having in Edinburgh lived with George, who, as an advocate (and therefore member of the College of Justice) was exempt from poor-rates, Charles was quite a novice in such matters.

14th April.

I am sitting in my back room, with a sombre light coming from the small window above; the other I never open. This light conveys the idea of seclusion and quietness. It is Sunday; and my house is hushed from the usual bustle. It has snowed all night, and now it is melting, and the streets plashy and uncomfortable; but I must presently be off to Brompton. My patient there seems likely to do well, and if he does, it will give me, in my own opinion, a considerable step; in showing me, and I trust others, that this long pursuit of study has some useful results. I have seen John and Lynn both attempt such operations, and both fail, for want, as I thought, of deliberation in the first place, and decision afterwards. Lynn and I happening at the same time to have similar cases, are each confident of success, though each believes that the other will lose his patient.

You ask me what I am about. Why, I am lecturing twice a-day, which is for an anxious temper something. My patients are far off.

. . . . Horner has my last essay in the proofs, for these three days, in his hand. I am now in a situation to profit by my works, and I think my Surgery will do me great good—in fact, establish me in practice. Adieu.

C. Bell.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

19th May, 1806.

Yesterday I was consulted by a Russian baron. I expect that next winter I shall have a very respectable business. You ask me of my pupils. They are very fond of me. One fellow I thought long my enemy, but I found that he, more than any other, had been beating up for recruits for my class next season. I intend to be with you the last day of the Session, if you will tell me when it is. I'll bring down my surgical papers: and shall we revise them when wearied with nonsense? Adieu. I'll write to you soon.

* * * * *

My dear George, this letter has been written a fortnight! I have been busy with my models,* patients, dinners, and books; yet this does not make an apology. I ought to be thinking of nothing more than endeavouring to comfort you in your many privations and sacrifices for the family. On the contrary, I allow the insignificant occurrences about me to make me forget both my duty and my pleasure. When once I set

* He had discovered a method of modelling morbid appearances in wax, retaining their colour in its original freshness, so as to perpetuate for the student much that was lost to them in the usual manner of preserving them. Sydney Smith wrote to Jeffrey, "I hope to see more of your friend Bell. He is modest, amiable, and full of zeal and enterprise in his profession. I could not have conceived that anything could be so perfect and beautiful as his wax models. I saw one to-day which was quite the Apollo Belvedere of morbid anatomy."

about it, it proves always a gratification to sit down and write you long letters. I have a letter from Robert this morning, telling me what you are all about.

Horner will give some of my books to Lords Cowper, Dartmouth, &c. I hope to send you two copies by Tuesday or Wednesday. I have actually forgotten the book, and long to see it together: I mean, to see sheets and drawings put together. I am reading Italian. Addio!

C. B.

27th June, 1806.

My dear George,

Altho' I have nothing particularly worthy your ear, I have desisted from writing on Surgery to take a chat with you; and you see that I am writing very small, and near the top of the page. I went yesterday to dine with Abernethy, and in the evening to Vauxhall. Last season it was the fashion to go early, this season few come till after twelve o'clock. When we were coming away, the dashing people were only arriving.

The night was pleasant, the scene brilliant, and my party, though not exceedingly interesting, agreeable. I had generally Mrs. Abernethy and two little ones under my care, and was quite *en famille*. It has this effect, that it brings you into quiet neighbourhood of gentle and decent people, and thus supported, you may stand peering *

* Charles Bell was very near-sighted, but did not at this time wear spectacles.

under the *head-dress* of the ladies (for it is absolutely something pretty, tho' I don't know what to call it). Mrs. Abernethy acknowledged that the lady who stood beside me was the most genteelly dressed, and had the finest, mildest eye she had ever seen. Abernethy quoted my book against me. He is sometimes as playful as a kitten.

On Saturday I went to Tom Campbell's at Sydenham. I walked out after dinner with Richardson, and got tea with the poet and his wife; then rambled down the village, and walked under the delightful trees in moonlight. We adjourned to the inn, and took an egg and plotty. Tom got glorious in pleasing gradation, until he began to swear I was the only anatomist worth a d—n. His wife received him at home, not drunk, but in excellent spirits. After breakfast we wandered over the forest; not a soul to be seen in all Norwood.

Campbell has a charming memory, and after sitting on the felled trees, he repeated delightful extracts. In these passages, as much as in his poems, his pure and classical taste was displayed. After dinner, we got frisky and childish again, and you know I am not behind in these matters. A donkey formed one of the society, who spurned me from his back in good style. . . . .

I have given up my newspaper for some time, and I do not know what is said of Fox—but he is very ill. They sent, it seems, for R—, who

prescribed largely, but examined nothing. They were obliged to seek for him in the corner of his coach when he came in the afternoon! Fox is threatened with dropsy, but is better.

C. B.

Yesterday a little circumstance happened to me which I think curious. I was walking down Bond-street with S. Mackenzie, when we came to the scaffolding of a house repairing. "Come," says I, "let's take all the chances of life in our favour." I had just stept off the pavement when, if I had stept forward, you would have had no more London letters. Remember to take all the chances in your favour.

You wish me to be much with Maton and Winn. You shall be gratified. I am at present attending Maton, poor fellow; and Winn fills my house with game—harbinger of himself.

Maton, by the bye, tells me my book is not forgotten in the Palace. The Princess Elizabeth has read it again and again, ... so I join with Maton, who has been much in the Royal presence lately—"Oh, what a woman! she is really a wonderful creature!" When Maton was living there, being in the garden, the Princess Elizabeth had got a dark apron on, and was working among the grapes with her pruning hook —puffing and blowing. In the meantime, an old gardener stood looking at her, and resting on his spade. "What are you looking at?" said she;

"am I not right?" "Oh, I dare say perfectly right," said the old rogue; "but I was just thinking what a nice wife you would make for a poor man."

Such a gardener would thrive, plant him in any soil!

C. B.

6th July.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

* * * * *

I wish to see Miss Shaw,* and I'll lay a bet I admire her who is partial to you before all the beauties in Ayr. I recollect two girls dressed in white, with large bonnets covering their faces. They sat on the sofa at Stockbridge playing with the children in the dark of the evening—that is all my imagination can grasp in regard to your favourites. I long much to see them, and am resolved to love them one way or other. I especially long to see her whom I hope to call Belle-Sœur.

With regard to our City belles, you are certainly right; but there are many here who are not *London* ladies, but country ladies—English ladies, than whom I do not know a finer creature. I have had a romantic partiality for them from my early youth, and it is now so pleasant to indulge that *youthful* fancy, that I endeavour, by all means, to cherish it. Adieu.

* Afterwards Mrs. G. J. Bell.

I have been out seeing Horner, who has been very ill—and at the same time his mind oppressed with a speech in the House of Peers. On Friday se'nnight Parliament rises. It is not that I will wait until that time, but in truth I must, to be comfortable, have all my manuscript of Surgery in my portmanteau. About that time I'll be done.

14th.

Some people are in a great rage at the acquittal of Melville. Another set of Scotchmen are delighted, and I know some who got drunk on the occasion. It was very diverting and impressive—the trial I mean—there was a fierceness in the demeanour of the "Guilty" Lords that was unbecoming. When each put his hand upon his heart and said, "Guilty, *on my honour*," it was—in Lauderdale particularly—with an emphasis not altogether amiable, and it was evidently against the feeling of the public present. The friends of administration had no idea of so complete and entire an acquittal. The magnificence of the whole scene and ceremony was very great, and really impressive. Adieu.

C. B.

G. J. BELL TO MISS SHAW, AYR.

EDINBURGH,
8th August, 1806.

* * * * *

Charles was quite enchanted with the days he passed in Ayr, and only regrets they were so few,

and that he so soon must journey from friends whom he so much esteems and loves. He will not leave me unmoved at beholding the brother of my heart, the bosom friend of my childish, my boyish, and more manly days, again separated so far, and plunged into that turbulent ocean of contest which alone can lead him to eminence and success. . . . .

FROM CHARLES BELL TO G. J. BELL.

17*th August*, 1806.
LONDON.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I came here *in course* this morning, and find things exactly as I expected. . . . .

At York I saw the Stricklands, a very fine family of English girls—the third one a lovely, soft, feminine character—but I prefer our Ayrshire friends. . . . . I lived the day with them, only that I went for two hours to the Races, and saw much good sport: but more among the betting animals than the running ones. . . . .

My book, the Longmans say, moves off. Lynn says everybody talks highly of it, and it is the very thing. "They don't understand it," he adds, "more than myself, but they admire it."

I have called twice this morning, but I have not yet seen Jeffrey, nor can I learn how the business stands.* He has been calling for me these two days. . . . .

* This was a few days after the hostile meeting between Moore and Jeffrey, on the 11th August, 1806. See Jeffrey's Life.

I have just had a long talk with Horner, who has called. All is amicably settled—Horner was second. As the pistols were raised, the Runners, who were behind the hedge, rushed out. In Horner's conversation with Moore's second, the first words were in admiration of Jeffrey's intrepidity and coolness. Horner fears there was much of indifference of life. Moore retracted his defiance. Jeffrey said that had he known Mr. Moore personally as well as some of their mutual friends, he would have avoided some of the personal expressions. Moore said that he would, he was certain, be a better man and a better writer in consequence of what had passed, as well as from the Review, for he was conscious that he had given himself license. The two little men breakfasted together to-day.

25th.

Longman's people sent a copy of my book to Flaxman (by the bye Flaxman's book is one, or rather two, which I miss; but if you have it—enough). He declared himself to them in great commendation, and said that he considered Mr. Bell as having done more for the arts than anyone of this age. I sent a copy to Fuseli, and he sent me a card thanking me for the rich and truly valuable present, and begged my acceptance of three very beautiful engravings from his pictures. They are from Milton—really very beautiful. I would have sent them to you, but think that they

will be of more intrinsic value to me. Adieu, my ever dear brother.

C. B.

FROM CHARLES BELL TO MISS SHAW.

September, 1806.

LEICESTER ST., LEICESTER SQ., LONDON.

MY DEAR MISS SHAW,

I am unable to guess whether a young lady may consider this address as being too familiar, or on the present occasion as frigid and unfriendly! But I know that it is cold, compared to what I would wish to use.

You have now my dearest interest and happiness in keeping, and this interest I commit to you with a grateful joy; indeed, when I think of this, I am almost tempted to use a term of greater endearment and closer attachment. You will find my brother beloved and respected—one to whom his friends have recourse when their misfortunes have sickened them with the common character of the world, and made them cleave to those of a feeling heart, with honour and abilities to give advice. Even to-day the proof of this is before me in a letter where a valued public character (Jeffrey) is taking leave of the world, and conjuring him to support his afflicted friends.*

But I need no solitary proof to convey to you my opinion of his worth; the better proof is that

* Jeffrey's farewell letter before his duel with Moore, addressed to G. J. Bell. See Jeffrey's Life, vol. i.

never in my whole life have we been separate, even for a few hours, until, in an evil day, resisting my usual bond of attraction, I came to London, a slave to ambition and pride.

* * * * *

Do not suppose, however, that the gentleman is without faults! Heaven forfend! What an insipid life you would be destined to. He has many faults, and sometimes I have been teazed with them, sometimes have laughed at them, and always, on recollection, liked them better than the best virtues of other people!

So you were displeased with my reserve and gravity? . . . . I am sure if absent, grave, or reserved, it must have been from heartfelt satisfaction. I'll tell you more of this hereafter. Keep up the remembrance of me with your sisters. You thought it necessary to assure me that I must be long acquainted with Marion * before I should be able to discover all her perfections. . . . .

Believe me to be, with great affection,

Ever yours,

CHARLES BELL.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

17th October, 1806.

MY EVER DEAR BROTHER,

I have managed this very ill—I have miscalculated the time, and missed the opportunity of

* The second Miss Shaw, afterwards Mrs. Charles Bell.

writing to you on the morning of your marriage,* as I intended. Believe me, my dear George, I am more pleasingly anxious about you at this moment than I can express. My own marriage I would enter upon with less satisfaction than what I now feel in thinking that your domestic happiness is secured. Nay, there is something selfish in the idea that if broken down in spirit, if incapacitated by ill-health, if subdued by continued opposition, I could come, like an old soldier, and take up my residence by the fireside of my dear and true brother, and my sister Barbara.

But at present I have no anxiety. I am kept close at work, but am happy in independence. . . . . I have just received your letter, and I am now going to lecture. This labour is ill-timed; I could follow your progress with delight, and meditate upon you—and I must go and lecture. Well! farewell for an hour and a half.

I have just come back, and I return to you with delight. But I confess to you that it is difficult for me to untrammel my feet, to get out of the bustle. I may think of you, but it must be while correcting proofs, making lectures, &c., &c.

This I consider as unnatural, when he whom I most value on earth is taking so important a step. I should have a jubilee—do something to mark the occasion, but here I am stupidly employed in my duties. But, my dear George, they are duties

* The post, in that time, took several days to convey a letter from London to Ayrshire.

to you as well as to myself, for I know you will not be happy if I should be uncomfortable; and to success, this incessant application is for the time necessary. Lecturing, which used to be my bane, is now my delight. Fuseli has called and overwhelmed me with compliments.

When and where shall this find you? I cannot calculate. I know it will find you happy, and I write it with a feeling unusual and agreeable. I see new holds on the world. To your children I think I could measure my degree of attachment, never to yourself. I have never had a feeling of pleasure or happiness in which you did not make part of the idea. My other young connections I hate or love as they deserve, but my love and affection for such beings as my imagination may now dwell upon I think must be on a very different foundation. No measure of offence could ever separate me from you or Barbara, or *yours*.

3rd November.

I have just stept out to see the majesty of the people at the Westminster election. The mob around Covent Garden is immense. Burdett is just now drawn by the mob under my windows. Marrow-bones and cleavers, music, noise, and hubbub is universal. The mob is with Paul. Tell me further of all your movements, and recommend me to the family. I'll recommend myself to Barbara some of these days, when I think she has time to read. C. B.

20th December, 1806.

My dear George,

I am in bustle and confusion enough; but when I doze, when I slumber, the good and bad things present to me are forgotten, and my ideas revert to old times. I find that I can be more cheerful than happy. I am the merriest in my own house, and I find no gloom ever encroaching on me, no melancholy. I am satisfied with London and with myself, my reception, and expectations, so don't imagine from any expression in my letter to Barbara that I am a slave in any sense of the word, and do not you look too narrowly into these letters, or you prevent me writing with freedom.

When I have run my course upwards or downwards, I'll return to you and spend the winter of my days with you—go down the hill with you hand in hand, and see your little gentlemen and ladies ascending, with much satisfaction.

You are anxious about my money matters. That is nonsense. I have got a great deal of money from my pupils, from my class, from Longman's, from my patients, yet this great house is empty to what I must make it. I have got essentials, but not comforts. It is very agreeable to find, go where I may, people willing to oblige me; it softens and ameliorates one's disposition.

Some one had taken it into their head that the Surgeon-General was averse to me. I went to him. I found his whole manner like a friend and

a gentleman. He said he wished to send me pupils, to give me every assistance, for my own sake, but as much because he thought it well for his cadets. He begged me to see him, or let him hear from me whenever he could be of any service to me or my friends or pupils.

Horner is quite serious in wishing me to write to the Nabob of Arcot. He had seen some letters of the Nabob in which he was requesting to see some of my works. So Longman has promised to do my Anatomy of Expression, and my Arteries, in red morocco and satin lining to send to his Highness.

Adieu, my ever dear brother.

C. B.

I'll write a long letter to Auntie when you are out of town.

CHAPTER V.

A Glimpse of the Country—Eating Husks with the Pigs—Prince Hoare—Letter Writing—The Brain, Mind, Madness—Household in Leicester Street—Dante's Inferno—St. Paul's—Ride with Abernethy—Angerstein Gallery—Bull-baiting—Second Course of Lectures—Elgin Marbles—First Discoveries in the Nerves.

1807.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

3rd January, 1807.

MY VERY MUCH BELOVED GOOD BROTHER,

I do indeed felicitate you! I feel a real pleasure in the expressions of your happiness.

* * * * *

6th February.

A band of Pandæans are playing before my window. They make me frisk it.* Last night I had a little supper here, with some good flute playing. It was intended to make Horner know Wilkie, the Scotch Teniers.

To-day, on going down to Chelsea, I passed over a green field; I dreamed all night of

* To the latest day of his life he could not refrain from "frisking it," as he called it, to music. If a street-fiddler struck up a lively Scotch air, he would begin to whistle, throw down his work, and, seizing his wife's hand, dance with her through the rooms.

pastures and spreading oaks, and green fields. I have not been off the stones these five months.

I shall certainly attend to your advice in regard to my style, but I am sadly afraid that it will be casting pearls before swine. I have been reading the Lettres de Sévigné. How unpleasant the reflection is that, notwithstanding the enthusiasm of love and friendship expressed in these letters when the mother and daughter came together, they were dissatisfied and unhappy with each other. To the mother the daughter was all, to the daughter the mother was but a point in a circle, and so I imagine the mother was unreasonable.

I must attend some of the Courts in two days in a case of lunacy. I examined the brain. I trust I shall not appear to disadvantage.

I feel the want of you so much. I feel so greatly the want of interest in all this bustle, that I am resolved to fall in love the first opportunity. Old Lynn says that I must wait; for, like the Stocks, I'll rise much in value. Of course I spurn at the ignoble idea.

Adieu, my ever dear brother.

C. B.

FROM J. RICHARDSON TO G. J. BELL.

18th February, 1807.

My dear Bell,

This letter would have been written last night,

but your brother came in about eleven. We had one game of chess, and a chat. All the happiness which I find in this place arises, with very little exception, from his society. We spend a few hours of several nights of the week regularly together —furious combats at chess and libations of negus to Scotch toasts. I need not tell you that your brother is succeeding. His own accounts, and all the accounts you hear, must assure you of this; he is in more constantly good spirits than at any time since his coming to London. His class, which, at the beginning of the season, was but small, is at least trebled in number; and the respect and affection with which he is regarded by all his pupils ensures the continuance of its increase. Fowell, one of his house-pupils (notwithstanding his being as holy a man as ever went to a Methodist meeting), talked of him to me lately in terms little short of idolatry. He said he had done more for the science of anatomy than any individual that had yet existed; and Lynn, half benevolently, half enviously, *hirples*, and smiles, and repeats, "I always told you, Bell, you would get to the top of the tree." His patients, too, are increasing, and their regard and confidence in Charles keep pace with their more intimate knowledge of him.

* * * * * *

Ever, dear Bell, yours truly,

J. RICHARDSON.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

DEAR GEORGE,

I have just now a note from Oxford, from Sir Christopher Pegge, desiring to see my museum! O Lord! Sir Christopher, I hope you are not coming all this way to see my museum. "Those there things" make me attend to it, however, which is good. . . . .

. . . . Interrupted by a serious rebuke from my friend Fowell. He asserts that my cook (Mrs. Cook is my housekeeper and cook) is eating husks with the pigs! I could not understand the matter, but I find that she is of his persuasion, and has been going to the play, and he has been denouncing her as damned. I insist upon it she is much improved. She came to me with a yellow, shrunk face, and a perpetual gloom was on it; now she looks rosy, and laughs and junkets thro' the house, and is unremitting in her attention to us all, and, I perfectly believe, to my interests. She mends my stockings, puts a clean flannel waistcoat *in my way*, gives me soup before lecture when she thinks I look pale, or roasted apples to my supper—has always fruit to put in my way. She is ever cheerful and anxious to supply all my wants. .
Should not such a being go to the play?

I don't know that I told you that I have three servants. Mrs. Cook's daughter, who is companion to an old lady, has had a great desire to come

among us, but I told her mamma she was too pretty.

26th March.

Prince Hoare was an artist, I believe. He is editing a periodical work, "The Artist;" papers written by West, Hoppner, Shee, Opie, Northcote. These are good men, and they put their initials to their papers; I know I shall be asked to write in it. Shall I? I say "yes." Horner the wise, says I must take care not to appear to the public too much to be occupied on the arts.

I dined yesterday with Murray, the publisher, Cumberland, Sir B. Burgess, James Graham,* and many others. After tea I took my leave, and when in the lobby there came a gentleman down-stairs in a great hurry, with Murray at his back, holding out his arms to me. He said he did not know that he had been in company so long with the author of the "Anatomy of Expression."

This was Prince Hoare.

28th.

I bought a pair of silver candlesticks to-day. The very little money I get above mere existence must go for furnishing for many a day.

Ever yours, my dear Brother,

C. B.

17th April, 1807.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Now I think on't you'll blame me for not telling you of the success of my book, but I cannot. I know

* Author of "The Sabbath."

one bookseller sold thirty copies in a few days. A. Cooper recommends it in his class. Dr. Baillie writes to me that it is full of excellent good sense; Mr. Pearson, that so excellent an anatomist must write a good book; all the young men delight in it, and say it is just what they want. In short, it has every appearance of being the Book. As for Abernethy, I can get nothing from him, unless you interpret to its advantage that he is particularly anxious to tell me of what he is going to do, and what fine things he is going to write, instead of speaking of my book. Lynn and I are what we have always been: he says the young men like it much.

It is not apathy, but a kind of conviction, that it is good that makes me very careless of their opinion.

Believe me that your desires are as yet pleasing commands to me, and that come what will I'll be with you, though I did not intend to revisit Scotland this year.

27th.

I feel that kind of restlessness which, were I your neighbour, would make me put on my coat and wander to your house, and perhaps have nothing to say but what every one must feel this morning, that it is one of the most charming days of the season. Last night I enjoyed a play, sitting between the twin sisters of Horner; they are very fine girls. Frank is as much an enthusiast as a boy of 16. He and William Murray

came in, and we all went home to supper in Russell Square. Horner had told me that he had received your book, or rather a letter. "Oh," said he, "it is a fine thing when a man of his virtue and talent, and rank in his profession, comes forward on truly disinterested principles." You are right, my dear George, to have an opinion on these matters of politics. I don't mean to take them as a ground of advancement, but of self-gratulation. Study the true principles and the historical facts connected with them, of which, God help me, I know nothing. Such a defective memory have I, that I have no encouragement to read history. But what I meant to say was, that by studying the biographical history of parties in England, you must appear to great advantage as a thinking man who has taken his opinion from his own examination. Would not the political history of transactions in Scotland since the Union be a fine subject if well handled? Parties in Scotland should be made ashamed of themselves, and people in England must ever wish to know the state of Scotland from its real importance, and as the cradle of so many eminent men—for Scotchmen, from their sense and energy, will ever hold sway here.

I and Horner are going to take a regular progress through all the galleries of London. I think of taking an "ass-skin" with me, and writing to you all my remarks if you will have them kept, and, while you read, correct. Tell me by-the-bye,

how I write. Why should not we correct one another? I'll tell you your fault. You write from a strong impulse of good-nature rather than seek an indulgence in writing. You bethink yourself that Charles has been very long without a letter, and you resolve to write a long one. Now, my dear brother, this is not the tone. Write a little at a time, and at a future time, and in a different mood write a little more. I intended this morning to write "a little" to you, and see where I am. This is like the lingering of a friend after supper.

You must tell auntie that both the ladies I danced with are delighted with me—the beauty says I am the most agreeable partner she ever had in that room!

C. B.

11th May, 1807.

My dear George,

I have in these two days written a quire of paper in notes and letters; I give you this last sheet. Since I wrote to you I have enjoyed a ride of thirty miles into the country, with a sense of enjoyment heightened by long confinement. I went to perform an operation, and lived two days with the first man in that part of the country. I rose in the morning before five o'clock, leaped the garden wall, and ran in full chase through the country, making acquaintance with every living thing I met. I found three young horses, an ass, a tame fox, and an owl, particularly conversible.

I was driven in by rain, and finding neither a book nor a scrap of paper to write to you, I lay down again in bed and enjoyed a waking dream. I thought that all was right in the system of the universe—that consistent with our desires and passions was the shortness of our life, and our being liable to suffering and disease—that without this we should have been inanimate, cold, and heartless creatures. Then I thought I perceived two great objects of our admiration and love: first, the inanimate creation, to enjoy which we must suffer privation, and only occasionally look upon this admirable face of things. I enjoyed the freshness of the morning, the green fields, the life and activity of groups of villagers in the hop-fields, all which seemed tame and flat to the natives themselves. Secondly, I thought we were granted a still higher enjoyment in the contemplation of mind, a resource infinite, because infinitely variable, a delight in our exertions strengthened by communication and sympathy.

My classes finish this week, I hope. I think the first leisure I have I will employ on a short essay on picturesque madness, which I will of course send to you.

Horner has lost his election, but has returned in great health and spirits. He danced mother-goose with his sister yesterday. I should dine there to-day, but I go with Dr. Maton to Lynn's cottage.

I am sorry for the change you expect in the law

courts, but who should feel indifferent to these matters if it be not you?

Adieu my dear G.,

C. B.

21st May, 1807.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I am casting about for a subject to make something new of. I have been thinking of the brain—of mind—of madness. Could I not put this subject in the form of queries as to the best way of prosecuting the subject, to be laid before Stewart or Jeffrey, &c. I would not publish any thing but in papers for this many years.

I see my "Book of Expression" is noticed in the Parisian journals: they say it is the result of many years' study, and that the best critics speak highly in its praise. Perhaps this Parisian account is manufactured in London, it is all one. When there comes peace I think I must go to Paris. I think I would make good use of the opportunities offered there, and of all things I should like to be kept and sent to the armies as a surgeon. If I had not this large house over my head, and were not tied down by a certain consistency of conduct, I would have been on the continent during this brush. This large house is more oppressive than a wife and family. It's bad enough, but it is still the best I could have. But, observe, I have to do the roof entirely, and build up one story of my gable end.

I have given you no criticisms of pictures, because

I have seen none but trash. On Wednesday I go to see the Marquis of Stafford's, with Horner. Speaking of Horner and others, mind, my dear George, to have your own calm opinion on all matters, and not subscribe to their notions. I don't say this in anger with them, for I love Horner, I love and admire Jeffrey, but my opinion of you is much higher than of these men, and I would wish to see your opinions formed by investigation, not communication. You will think me very free in my advice. As to politics, I have no information to give you. We are in a perpetual bustle with marrowbones and cleavers. I shall give a *plumper* to old Sheridan some of these days—he will not have it, but I wish to see him respectable on the poll. I have got another pupil, a genteel lad, but I fear not bright. I'll take nothing but what looks well now. My young men are all handsome; indeed, the English are remarkably handsome—the Scotch very ugly; but now I recollect *myself*, there are exceptions!

If my patients would be as considerate as my pupils, they would fill my coffers *jusqu'au bord*. As it is, I sometimes strut, sometimes hang the head. I can only study when my pockets are full, which I conceive to be a demonstration that I was intended for a gentleman.

Last night I saw, by chance, the introductory epistle to Walter Scott's new poem; it is extremely poor: "Pitt at the Helm." The name of Pitt in a poem is as bad as one of the models of

the Academy this year, where Genius is presented writing "Pit" on the pit of the stomach of Britannia, spelling it with one t, the pencil of the Genius still on the letter!

Tuesday, 16*th June*, 1807.

My dear George,

This reaches you, I believe, before setting off—good—nothing has given me more happiness. When I first received your letter, I was astonished that my spirits did not receive a greater rise. I gave two skips, and was yet astonished at my own indifference; but since I have contemplated the event, my gratification is rapidly increasing.

Be sure you carefully obey our instructions. Sleep at York; eat little on the road; and do not exert yourself by working hard before you are off.

You'll be contented with me and mine? It would be profanation to spend the time otherwise than together. I have neither breath nor time left to say more than that I am in full hope that we shall both meet well, and consequently happily.

Adieu. Yours ever,

C. B.

It was not, however, till July that George reached London. The following letters to his wife describe the bachelor household in Leicester Street.

G. J. BELL TO HIS WIFE.

6th July, 1807.

11, LEICESTER ST., LEICESTER SQ.,
LONDON.

MY DEAREST BARBARA,

I arrived here yesterday, about five o'clock, and found nobody at home. Charles had been prevailed upon by his pupils to give them a day at Croydon, about ten miles off, and they did not return till ten o'clock. So I was left to wander in this large house, making myself acquainted with all my old friends in the museum, and scraping up a kind of kindred intimacy with their adopted brethren. Then I went to Richardson's, whom I found writing to Cockburn. He hopped over the small table he was at, and had me in his arms in a moment, and danced about, and laughed, and screamed. . . . . Charles called there on going home; and so perfectly was he persuaded that I was not coming, that he imagined it was John, when he heard of his brother from Scotland having arrived. . . . . I slept in Charles's room; he on a nice sofa. We gabbled a great deal from our respective nests, and then fell asleep.

Charles is strong, hearty, and in admirable good spirits. His lads adore him. Mrs. Cook, his housekeeper, tends him like a kind old nurse who had bred him up from childhood. His house is good—his fare (tell Auntie) comfortable. His hens are screaming in full chorus under my

window, after having supplied us with fresh eggs this morning. . . . .

We made out the opera last night, and were it not for the expense, I should go every night. . . . .

20th July.

I fear I shall not bring Charles with me. The regret of parting with him for a long winter, in which he must recommence severe labour, is the only thing that casts a shade over my departure from London. There is this comfort, however, that the labour, though severe, is interesting, full of novelty, and enterprise.

He is in the museum with a gentleman who begged for an introduction to him for the purpose of seeing it. Many people come to see his museum, but it is not yet so far advanced as the labour and expense bestowed on it I hoped would have made it. However, it only requires him to go on with it as he has begun; and I am told, that even now, it is one of the most interesting things of the kind in London.

God bless you all,

G. J. B.

FROM C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

7th August, 1807.

My ever dear Brother, —

. . . . It was well that I had a lively party to go to after parting with you, for I was a little unhappy. Of all the deserts to be left in,

the bustle of the City is the worst; and my feelings were much as when we last parted in some narrow street God knows where. I envy you your reception at home. . . . .

17*th*.

Make your arrangements as you think fit about young Shaw,* and remember that I do not acquiesce merely, but will readily and happily agree to them. The boy should be here eight days before the classes, viz., the 1st of October.

On Monday I ride out with Abernethy. On Tuesday I dine at Hampstead. But what is Hampstead, Highgate, or Clapham to me now? Be that as it may, you'll find I'll not forego all custom of exercises; and I trust I shall retain my reason and faculties unimpaired, an instance of which I am about to give you on the subject of moral faculties. But first let me speak to you of *Dante*, as I am going to give him up for the time.

Dante was born in 1468. He was a partizan in the contests of the Guelfi and Ghibelini. At the head of the cavalry at Campeldino he gained the character of a great general and an intrepid soldier. In the vicissitudes of the times, he was banished, and afterwards sentenced to be burned alive; and after flourishing in great eminence and power, he was forced to wander thro' Italy in

* Mrs. Bell's second brother, John Shaw, at this time about fifteen years of age, became afterwards not only Charles Bell's favourite pupil, but most devoted and affectionate friend.

great indigence. When such a man is a poet, we will not expect him to write verses, but to be full of matter, to have a keenness and sharpness of invention, to excel in portraying the dark, sullen, and ferocious character. So you will find him. His characters are drawn with a dash; some characteristic feature is presented to you, and you imagine the rest. Thus, the Grecians, "*Genti v' eran con occhi tardi e gravi*" "*parlavan rado con voci soavi.*" * Instead of saying "The fiend was quelled," he says "*Quinci fur quete le lanose gote.*" † He says, somewhere, "As the swelling sail falls to the mast, so fell his pride;" which I think a very beautiful image. He makes the huge Chiron waft aside his flowing beard with the arrow, that he might give his command ere he placed it in the bow. The chilly and horrid strength of his imagination is often shown in the "Inferno." There is a simplicity and naturalness, too, in some of the magnificent scenes that is ludicrous. He and his leader are put under the unwilling guidance of demons. Dante hears one say to another, from whose ill-looking countenance he could not keep his eyes, "Shall I do it now?" "Yes, quick, there to the heart." The translation I have used now and then is often very beautiful, but has nothing of the pith and energy of the original. He is obliged to enlarge the description, which has the very reverse effect of adding strength to the image. Dante seems

* Inferno, canto 4. † Inferno, canto 3.

not to have considered the language, but the idea conveyed; and the strength and brevity of his description are perhaps to be attributed to the infancy of the language. For the beautiful in the "Inferno," read the story of Paolo and Francesca, in the 5th Canto. For the horrible, Ugolino.

But I must have done with my criticism, which you, I hope, will criticise in turn. I, perhaps, will continue the subject some day.

Remember me to Mrs. Shaw, and assure her of attention to her son. Send him up.

Adieu, my dear brother.

C. B.

3rd September, 1807.

MY EVER DEAR BROTHER,

I must tell you of a visit I made to St. Paul's to-day. I shall never miss going there when I am in that part of the City about three o'clock. I had intended to have gone further, but I was fatigued, and seeing the doors of the Cathedral open, I went in. The vastness of it, the coolness, the strange sound of the distant feet and whispers of those who were pacing the remote aisles, the haziness of the overhanging canopy, the recent trophies hung from the roof, the tattered remains of the trophies of triumphs quite forgotten in the pressure of the present anxious expectation, long held me in a pleasing reverie—a solemn train of thought, in strange contrast with that state of mind the necessary consequence of the bustling, jostling crowds from which I seemed to have

taken refuge as in a sanctuary. I had visited the monuments,—I was congratulating myself on my rationality in distinction to the gaping fools who were there—and whose feelings were probably as acute as my own—by the dropping of jaws and stupid stare,—when, in the meantime, the choir had assembled, and the deep tones of the organ burst on my ear, seeming to fill and occupy as with an existence the whole immense space above me. Then, in diminished strength, and falling into softer notes, the choir of boys joined. It was chanting, not the singing of the Psalms. I never was more affected. The tears rolled down my cheeks . . . . if I had then had an object of charity, I should have been most bountiful: had I then had to make love, I should have been most impressive.

7th.

Yesterday I took my first ride with Abernethy. We went over Highgate Hill, and down on the other side towards Finchley, came round through the most enchanting bye-roads to Enfield, dined at Southgate, and rode home in the afternoon. My companion is quite a peculiar creature, but I believe the infection of my delight made him unusually free and frisky; and strange to say, in all our ride we met nobody. I gave my companion much credit for the choice of roads, and was not a little astonished to find the principle which guided him thus announced on coming into town thro' the last gate. "There," says he, "I'll

venture to say there is not another man who will take you a ride of twenty miles round London for three halfpence." His avoiding tolls took me thro' these very roads I delight in.

I have just written, with painful feelings, a parting letter to poor Slater * at Portsmouth. You would laugh to see my charge to him. I shall have a fine family of boys abroad in the world by-and-by, but, alas! no daughters! Now, I should like them best. Remember to send up young John Shaw before the first of next month.

8th.

I have just been at Angerstein's house. There are not above twenty pictures, but their prices are from two to six thousand. There are some beautiful Claudes. There is certainly a uniformity, not to say sameness, in his pictures that might be characterized. In the first instance, I should speak of the effect of light, perhaps. But what I chiefly admire is his architecture,—the loftiness, airiness, and richness of the palaces. You observe, too, that he does not weakly attempt to preserve what in a builder would be consistency, but he makes the union of different orders of architecture highly picturesque. You find the round tower of a castle standing beside a rich villa with pilasters, and porticos, and balconies, and on one façade you see a simple Roman fabric, on the other the rich Grecian. He is

* A favourite pupil, who was afterwards lost on his return voyage from India.

careful to give airiness to his buildings, by admitting the light amongst the ornaments, and letting the clear sky be seen thro' the windows or in the interstices of the pillars. He does not seek to make his castles and palaces picturesque by breaking them down into ruins, but he makes them habitable, and peoples them, and bestows on them a charm in the air of magnificence and splendid festivity that seems to be within and appears all round. By exquisite taste and management of the shadows he produces the greatest splendour of lights, without—like other painters, offending you in the same proportion with the deep dead black of the ground. His scene is all illuminated. This effect he produces by placing betwixt you and the light some object that admits the rays of light but scatters them, and for this purpose he particularly delights in shipping. The rigging is almost invisible in the brightness of day, and the hull sends a length of reflection which gives—by contrast—brilliancy to the surrounding waters. In the grouping of the shipping he shows the same excellence that we admire in the architecture. In his other pictures,—but soft —break we off;—the bellman for letters.

Just parted with Murray: he, Horner, and Brougham were with me at Angerstein's.

Adieu. C. B.

21st September, 1807.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You say that you like my account of pictures; I am happy you do, for then I shall proceed.

I entirely disbelieve what has been said of Raphael's pictures, that you pass thro' the gallery the first time without being particularly called towards them. It is impossible! The strength of the physiognomy, the grandeur and energy of the figures arrest the eye; there is a vision before you; something you have not seen or imagined is present to you, and as you make out the parts and comprehend the whole, you are the fuller of admiration. My friend says that he has a painter's eye; I'll give you an instance: Holloway, engraver to his Majesty, is engraving these cartoons, and he was drawing them as an engraver draws, beautifully minute and stippled in the nicest manner. But is it to be conceived that a man of sense could drag me from the original, and put a magnifying glass into my hand to see the other! These engravings, by the bye, of Holloway's will be very fine, and if you are inclined, and have money, you cannot do better than subscribe to the work. But this is my opinion on comparing them with the original: the freedom of the pencil is quite lost, the decision of the lines disappears in the softened engraving, and there is a great want of the sharp termination of the shadow—which is particular in the cartoon. In the drawings, the distinction

of substance is quite lost, and I imagine the engravings will have the same fault. I observe, too, that in the engravings I thought I discovered faults in the anatomy which I could not see in the original, and yet, on comparing the two together, I could not see the error. Now, neither my companion nor these strangers seemed at all to comprehend the high merit of these cartoons—neither, I suppose, they ever would, but by imitation; nor do I suppose that Sir Joshua Reynolds did really ever enter with his whole soul into a feeling of these pictures. He seems to me never to have possessed more than a feeble tastefulness: he was a kind of gentleman painter, but not a man of strong powers. I confess, however, I must see more of his paintings before I can determine on his character. But what he can have meant by saying that Raphael never was able to conquer perfectly that dryness or even littleness of manner which he inherited from his master, I cannot comprehend. It is, to be sure, speaking of his paintings in oil, and contrasting his frescoes with his oil paintings; but, even in this department, how superior he is if we look on that portrait of the Pope which is in Angerstein's collection. In it there is life—yet a composed grave-seated dignity. Looking on this portrait I do not understand what is meant in these words, "He never acquired that nicety of taste in colours, that breadth of light and shadow, that art and management of suiting light to light,

and shadow to shadow, so as to make the object rise out of the ground with that plenitude of effect so much admired in the works of Correggio." Sir Jos., p. 125. I am not sure that I am justly blaming Sir Joshua, but, on the contrary, betraying my own opinion of the superiority of form and character over the effect of *paintings* of colour and shadow. Since I am come again to the citizen's collection, let me tell you that there is a fine Correggio, and next to it a Titian. The Correggio is Susannah and the Elders. She is a beautiful figure, folding herself up from a natural or instinctive timidity, but yet not a perfect pudor appears in the face. The back shoulders, and arms are the objects of admiration, and they rise from the shadow of the picture with a clearness, and fairness, and beauty of form highly pleasing. Titian's is next to it, and if first looking on it, you then direct your eyes to Susannah, you pity her as shrinking in cold stormy weather. She is naked; but the figures in Titian are native to the climate, and require no incumbrance of clothes. The drawing is not inaccurate in Titian's picture, but yet defective in beauty. You will say, "Enough of this." Adieu, then.

Write often about yourself and your family.

C. B.

September, 1807.

My dear Brother,

For want of better amusement I'll even write

to you again! The most famous picture in this collection is that of the Raising of Lazarus, drawn by Michael Angelo, and painted by Sebastian del Piombo. It is, I suppose, nine feet by eleven. We might say that, this being a miracle, it is right to make Lazarus all alive and sprung at once into vigour. I cannot agree to this. He sits much like a river-god, and is spurning the swathing cloths like a Hercules tearing off the poisoned shirt; he is muscular, and of Herculean strength. "Lazarus was *dead.*" Jesus said unto them plainly, "Lazarus is dead;" and when Jesus came he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. "He was informed of his sickness, too, before his death, and Martha said, 'By this time he stinketh.'" In short, he died of sickness, and should have been as a dead man reviving. To tell the story, and to interest the feelings, he ought to have been in that amaze of imperfect faculties. But he is here already directing himself to Jesus, and the wonder has gone down with the spectators. The colour of Lazarus is as of a man bronzed by the smoke of Hell, rather than of the bleached colour of the grave. The drawing of the figure is very fine, and the head with the face seen in part through the napkin, has a dark horrifying aspect. In the attitude of Christ there is much grandeur, but I think there is meanness in the countenance —it has no mild beauty. Jesus came to the grave much moved. Jesus wept, &c. This, to a

painter of high genius, would have afforded the finest study.

* * * * *

Your letter of this morning has made me very happy *—a girl! good! Cecilia is a pretty name, and it is well, when you can make so good a use of a name as to please old folks. May you be happy as you deserve.

* * * * *

You will think it odd, and the ladies will think it still stranger, that I should be mounted on a cart at a bull-baiting! but such are the changes of life. I wished to see it, and was gratified; it is quite a proper thing—quite delightful to see the ring of fellows in the fancy—which is the slang expression—and the eagerness of the combatants. Of course I was a philosopher, and studied expression, yet I looked very *game*, being in a coloured coat, riding breeches, and full boots. But my time is up.

Adieu, my ever dear George,

C. B.

1*st October*, 1807.

My dear Brother,

I made John Shaw write to you to-day to tell you that at my introductory lecture all went well. I gave a very so-so lecture to a good class—that is to say, the little theatre which I have made to hold thirty-five, was overflowing. I gave

* Announcing the birth of George's first child, named Cecilia after "auntie."

out ten tickets before lecture, and I never in any former year gave one. On looking to my book of fees for your information I find I have received 283*l.* 14*s.* in the last two months.

I wish to Heaven I had a day's shooting with you! The day will come. I have taken a fancy for the whole of this day that I ought to buy a little horse to carry me out after lecture—because, though I enjoy good health, yet this kind of life may tell upon me in the long run. I can get a little stiff, broad-backed pony for twenty-five to thirty-five guineas, very good. A good pony is to be had for 20*l.* Tell me how you like this plan. Do not say that you would rather I had a carriage! for that is destruction to a man's health.

I believe the names of my patients are changed, though the numbers are nearly the same. I hope soon to be receiving some considerable fees.

Tuesday night.

I find it a long time since I began this letter, but I have been kept so bustling and interested in little matters about the class, that I have scarcely had an idea since I last wrote worth communicating. My class goes on; fewer students than I expected; yet on the whole goes well.

I have another hundred in my coffers, but with a breath it will melt again. I have taxes, rent, and accounts to pay that will require it and more. When I get a little money I find I will get miserly too. I feel already a desire of putting

the fives and tens in order, and delight of all things to push a hundred into a corner! These I hope you will consider as good symptoms? In three days—by cure, desertion, and war—my patients have marvellously retreated, as if to leave me free to attend to my pupils for a time. I had two captains, and they are both gone to Spain.

14th October.

My dear Brother,

This has been my first lecture on Surgery—overflowing and as absurdly full as my disappointment was great in the anatomical course. This has given me spirit to write to you, which I could not think of doing before, having only bad news to communicate. My anatomical course has been as bad, or let me say no better than it was last year. I have been disappointed on all hands. Everybody had pupils for me, but no one turned up! I am thus by character slowly getting a class, but it is uphill work. The most distressing thing is the deficiency of house pupils, and being left with a child and a fool, whereas I thought I had secured four active partizans. But let me not speak ill of my little fellow Johnnie, who will be worth six of these foolish Englishmen. He will be a very fine fellow; he does everything he can, and anticipates orders, which I like very much. I'll use him to shame these fat ones.

I had an audience of sixty to-night. I dashed

at them somewhat irregularly and somewhat to my satisfaction. Three cadets and a general pupil was the result of the game, and I believe it will be productive. My patient Winn,* is my most attentive pupil. One house pupil would reinstate me in comfort. But, as I am situated, my dear Geo., you must not expect to hear from me.

Rest satisfied that I will, rich or poor, so conduct myself as not to be very unhappy, nor want respect.

I am delighted with your picture of yourself, and the happiness you so well deserve.

C. B.

19th November, 1807.

My dear George,

I have of late made a practice of going early to bed, but to-night I have sat rather late, and the candle is just settling under the socket. I take up my pen again to describe to you, according to our engagement, a very fine collection I saw to-day—not of pictures of modern or of old masters—I was carried to the very fountainhead.

Lord Elgin, when ambassador at Constantinople, got freedom of pillage, and he has broken and carried off all he could of the ruins of Athens. When I visited Sir John Henderson, he offered to

* The Hon. George Winn, whom Charles Bell had previously known in Edinburgh. He always retained much affection for him and his family.

take me to see them, which few have yet beheld. I was happy in the opportunity.

These remains are not put up in the regular order of a gallery, but a large house has been built for them, and they are laid in something of an accidental confusion. Here you see the trunk of a colossal statue, there the head of an Apollo; in one place a group of women of giant size, mutilated, but still very fine; in another beautiful columns, pedestals, capitals, friezes, pieces of the roof of the Temple of Theseus, reliefs of the most spirited warriors and horsemen, Centaurs, horses' heads, altars, sarcophagi, entablatures, &c. You look up to see the lofty walls from which these ruins have fallen. Really one's conceptions are expanded in the contemplation of these fragments. You see the art in its best age, where all is elegance, richness, and even profusion.

I wish I could give you an idea of the figures. There is one which I think is superior to the Torso of M. Angelo. It is the trunk, part of the arms and thighs, and one leg, colossal, of a character distinctly Grecian, from the simplicity of the form. There is a massiveness and breadth in the laying out of the muscles, in the flatness of the thighs; there is fleshiness in the form of the joints, great strength in the twisting of the trunk, great beauty and display of difficulties overcome. The muscles of the back, and the lines of the compressed belly, equally to be admired.

There is a piece which, if it had been entire,

would have surpassed all other remains of antiquity. It may be Neptune rising from the sea, from an irregular surface as of water; the arms are just emerging and half-floating, the neck and shoulders are seen, but the head and face is broken off; there is strength and beauty united in the neck, shoulders, and arms, and there is something in the inclination of the figure implying buoyancy, and as if the broad chest were rising on the surface of the water.

I am going to send you the picture of an old man's head for your hall.*

Yours, C. B.

26th November, 1807.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Observe the effects of example. I write no longer in the still night, when the starting of a wainscoting or the creaking of a door terrify, but now, "the morning, in russet mantle clad, walks o'er the eastern hills," or I see her thro' the dim smoke climbing yon chimney-pot—perhaps to sweep it! You have determined me . . . . my fire is on, and my tea-things clinking by seven

* This was a picture of Opie's, full size portraits of the famous conjuror Chamberlain, and of Opie's first wife (the daughter of a Jew broker, to whom Opie used to sell his pictures). It is one of the finest specimens of the master, and was formerly in Sir Joshua Reynolds's collection. When Wilkie many years afterwards, saw it in G. J. Bell's house in Edinburgh, he started back, exclaiming, "I always said that picture was not lost." It was numbered in the catalogue of Sir J. Reynolds's collection as "The lost Opie." It is now in the possession of J. D. Bell, barrister-at-law, G. J. Bell's youngest and sole surviving son.

o'clock. I rise more vigorous, and study and write with more "spunk." It is a new life, and I have begun to see that if a man is to continue a student in this great town, it must be by rising in the morning.

I have done a more interesting nova anatomia cerebri humani *than it is possible to conceive. I lectured it yesterday. I prosecuted it last night till one o'clock, and I am sure that it will be well received.**

31*st.*

* * * * *

I really think this new Anatomy of the Brain will strike more than the discovery of the Lymphatics being absorbents.

Adieu. C. B.

5th December, 1807.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have been very busy to-day; *took* twenty-four guineas in the morning, *gave* a long lecture, dined with a party at Brompton at Col. Baillie's, and returned home at eight o'clock to my evening lecture in good style to a very crowded class—a respectable number at least. Now I am going to bed thoroughly fatigued.

My new Anatomy of the Brain is a thing that occupies my head almost entirely. I hinted to

* This is the first *written* record that can be traced of the commencement of Charles Bell's discoveries in the nervous system. He gave them publicly to his pupils, step by step, so that anv of them were free to prosecute his views. See Appendix.

you formerly that I was *burning*, or on the eve of a grand discovery.

I consider the organs of the outward senses as forming a distinct class of nerves from the other. I trace them to corresponding parts of the brain totally distinct from the origins of the others. I take five tubercles within the brain as the internal senses. I trace the nerves of the nose, eye, ear, and tongue to these. Here I see established connections. Then the great mass of the brain receives processes from these central tubercles. Again the greater mass of the cerebrum sends down processes or crura, which give off all the common nerves of voluntary motion, &c. I establish thus a kind of circulation, as it were. In this inquiry I describe many new connections. The whole opens up in a new and simple light; the nerves take a simple arrangement; the parts have appropriate nerves; and the whole accords with the phenomena of the pathology, and is supported by interesting views.

My object is not to publish this, but to lecture it—to lecture to my friends—to lecture to Sir Jos. Banks' coterie, to make the town ring with it, as it is the only new thing that has appeared in anatomy since the days of Hunter; and, if I make it out, as interesting as the circulation or the doctrine of absorption. But I must still have time. Now is the end of a week, and I will be at it again.

You ask me to send the book—do you mean the book of surgery? The proof by me is at page 144, and I have all the rest to write. It presses me like a nightmare.

I certainly had nothing to do with answering Carlyle. . . . .

You ask me if the election for this professorship is likely to be soon.* The man (Sheldon) is alive, but he cannot now lecture; a vacancy is not declared, nor likely to be soon.

The voters are the Academy, forty in number. Those who have influence are his Majesty, the Royal Family, nobility, and gentry: all who ever had their faces drawn, or are in the habit of considering themselves amateurs.

Friday night.

I have been spending the evening with Mr. and Mrs. Winn. Lord Headley has been with Sir Jos. Banks, and Sir J. says I am the person best entitled to the situation, and if his name can be of any service he shall be happy, or call on those he can influence.

Remember me to them all, not forgetting Miss Marion and her little charge. I dare say she looks very pretty—as much so as when her mamma made her read aloud from the great family Bible.

26th November, 1807.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Everybody assists me in this matter of the

* The Professorship of Anatomy to the Royal Academy.

Professorship of the Royal Academy. Make everybody write! The Horners—all of them—and Winn take the most lively interest in it. I dined with Dr. Baillie yesterday; he says I must be the man: Fuseli, that I ought to have it; and that if he had promised his vote to Carlyle, the paper he had since written would absolve him from giving it. This evening I wrote to West—and that I hope will be backed by powerful friends—to offer to lecture to the students under the sanction of the President, and to perform the duties, remitting the salary to the professor.

You are not free of the danger of my drawing on you, my dear George, which, notwithstanding all your brotherly affection, I consider as my only misfortune. . . . .

Adieu, my dear fellow.

C. B.

CHAPTER VI.

The Queen's Copy of his Book—New Idea of the Brain—Modern Athletes—Professorship of Anatomy to the Royal Academy—Carlyle's Election—The Opera.

1808.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

1*st January*, 1808.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You see I am not to lecture in the Academy. I called lately on West; he was very polite and friendly, and gave me assurance that he considered me as alone entitled to the place; talked of his regard for the improvement of his art, and of the assistance I would be to them, &c.; but that the general opinion was that nothing should be done to displace Sheldon at present. So I resolved to set about my private class according to promise.

Dr. Maton presented a copy of my book to the Princess Elizabeth. She was delighted with it, Maton says, and went over it, and *she was pleased to say it was* QUITE IN HER WAY! Maton then said I had a desire of presenting it also to her Majesty. "Oh," says she, "have you a copy for the Queen?" So luckily he had, and she carried it to her mother. The Queen spoke to Maton of it on the birthday,

with great admiration, and begged him to convey her thanks to me. One of the ladies of the bedchamber told Maton the Queen was reading it for two hours last night. Oh, happiness in the extreme, that I should ever write anything fit to be dirtied by her snuffy fingers!

I thought to have been able to write you a long letter, but I am not. I sent your bill * to all whom you directed, immediately, and with notes from Horner desiring their attention to it.

Adieu, then; but let me not forget the business of this letter, to wish you all a happy new year, and many o' them, viz., Auntie, Barbara, Marion, Cecilia, and David.

C. B.

8th February, 1808.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

When I have a subject that admits of reasoning and deduction, I have my applause. Winn, who is a gentleman and a scholar, said that he has seldom enjoyed such uninterrupted delight as in hearing my lecture, on the skull, to the painters. I find in my lecture that the only thing worthy of preparation is arrangement—and instead of a catchword, a leading idea. I could put the notes for a lecture on my nail. Some parts in my *prelections* to the painters I study as ornamental, such as the character of a Sibyl, the circumstances of death, of a woman fainting from weakness on

* On the Bankrupt Law of Scotland.

losing or finding her child—but I never attempt to remember words.

Now to more disagreeable matters. The great sums which I have had, my dear George, have vanished *

* * * * *

However, I am just going to prepare a lecture for the painters. This, instead of depressing me, carries my thoughts away from comparing my necessities with my means. Besides, it is nothing but what I expected, and I think you also.

C. B.

19*th March*, 1808.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Last night in looking for my notes of lectures, I had occasion to turn over the manuscript I got from Robert, of our father's life. Though I knew the painful nature of the employment, I gave up the object of my pursuit, and sat down to read it. I read it with much more pleasure than I ever did before, I believe I should rather say with a quieter grief. I became at last quite nervous, and on coming to your birth, I was attacked with a very perfect fit of hysterics, which at two o'clock in the morning sent me to bed a melancholy wight. I am going to have it handsomely bound, and a

* Though, like many devoted students, he was not practical in household concerns, these and his personal expenses were always moderate. But the necessary "tools of his profession," the large sums required for salaries, double rents, &c., easily accounted for the rapid disappearance of "money taken in fees."

lock put on it. You once asked me for it. Who was Major Learmonth, of Newholm, after whom you were called? Our great grandfather? Where did he live? I will some day try to recollect my early scenes, and hint them to you.

8th July, 1808.

My dear George,

I have your very kind letter beside me. The motives and views you give me are very consolatory. I have been since you left me a very idle fellow, taking extracts from "Dante," and making appropriate sketches from them. But last night I sat late with my notes on the Brain, and I will send you my introduction, which is a view of the whole system. It is this I would print, but the description of the brain I would reserve for more labour of succeeding winters. I wish you would take a book of anatomy, be it the Encyclopædia or anything, to understand the received account, that you may know my *merits*, how different the view I take.

I confess I like it the more I consider it; but this is common, you will say, in all hobbies.

15th.

The night ended with a guinea, and the morning begun with it. I have said that I have completed my view of the Brain, but it is only the introduction to the strict anatomy, giving a view of my system, for I find that it embraces the whole nervous system. As soon as John has transcribed

it I'll send it down to you.* I expect you will correct it, and have it transcribed, and then give it to Jeffrey and Playfair, as I will to Brougham and some others.

I think to the profession at large it will prove most acceptable; and while some will adopt it, I trust the most captious will say it is ingenious. But read and give me your opinion. Explain that I wish to have read before the Royal Society a series of papers, this being the first—the second being more strictly anatomical, and the third being the subject treated pathologically. I'll write to Jeffrey about it.

Or, if it does not seem good to us to have it read before the society, then, perhaps, to have it printed, or first read here, and then printed. But I wish to have it in some way agitated before the winter.

* * * * *

16*th.*

I have thought much, though I have done little in writing, my Brain; in truth, the writing must be short, and yet embracing much. I am delighted with it more and more, and I must very soon send you a *précis* that we may talk it over in our letters. C. B.

26*th July*, 1808.

My dear George,

I had been grumbling for some days that comparisons of the modern athletes and the antique

* This copy, with G. J. Bell's corrections, is still extant.

had been making, and exhibitions of Jackson, the boxer, &c., without my presence. On Saturday, when I came home I found that Lord Elgin had called, and written a note requesting me to come and see an exhibition of the principal sparrers, naked in his museum. I went, and was much pleased. The intention was that we might compare them with the remains of antiquity. There were Flaxman, Fuseli, and several other Academicians. After the exhibition, the Academicians showed excellent play; they were all making their remarks, all jealous of each other. Each had his little circle, and all giving oblique thrusts at each other. Two men of more profound conceit than —— and —— are not to be found. —— is all mock humility; he gives one gentle tap at a gentleman's door, and slips back three paces, yet he told me one night in that quiet easy manner that seems to say it is an understood thing, "*Michael Angelo* was a painter, but no statuary." Now this, you know, from a kind of lapidary is humble enough. —— is unquestionably a man of genius; his sketches are remarkably fine, but often he paints a log for a man; is rarely simple, which is an ingredient in the truly sublime or grand. In his painting he is extravagant; in his writing turgid and inflated, labouring and big with something which he cannot express, and in his criticism more extravagant still. He thinks it an error in Shakspeare that when the cry of women marks the death of Lady Macbeth, she does not

appear. He would have had her struggling in death among white sheets. And in that beautiful passage, where in the approach to the castle of Macbeth so fine a contrast is observed between the repose and softness of the scene with the horrors which are to follow, he would have had owls and bats' wings, and cobwebs and spiders, hanging from bough to bough, encirling this scene of blood.

You cannot think, my dear George, how much it goes against my feelings to canvass the business of this lectureship among those men. But what is all this to the purpose? I have seen the King! It was to write of him that I took pen in hand, and the Queen and the Princess Elizabeth. In short, I have been on the terrace, and have seen Windsor. I must now write to you of those things in my next. I am very happy this change has taken place in your court, it must make a man more independent. These changes, with the encouragement for resigning, must be in your favour. I am happy you are making a quarto: go on in your own way.

Yours, C. B.

5th August, 1808.

My dear Brother,

I am much pleased with what you say of my manuscript of the Brain. I hope Jeffrey will like it. How can you be anxious for its originality? Did I not tell you to read before you got it? To tell you the truth, you cannot be more pleased

with it than I am. I am sure that I am correct; and I think there will be a great proportion who will, as you say, acknowledge that it is ingenious, when they mean to say it is not true. . . . .

I am really engaged, so that my Surgery goes on slowly.

You ask what Campbell is doing. Between ourselves, he is palsied with fear. He dare not publish, and has never gone further than you saw. If this delay were a test of genius, I must be a mighty great one too. . . . .

Could you not get Dugald Stewart, or Playfair, to look at my manuscript of the Brain?

* * * * *

I have just received your packet, and it is a little perplexing. I cannot distinguish Jeffrey from you. You have concealed from me the general impression on Jeffrey. It is not meant to explain the anatomy of the Brain, but to state to those who are supposed to know it, the ground and outline of a train of observations, to follow in papers on the Anatomy and Pathology of the Brain, and to establish my claim to these discoveries, if I may yet term them so. Still there may be good reason why I should address myself to the ignorant, though I know it will be construed into conceit and parade. But I will set earnestly to work to do it.

I wish you had either told me Jeffrey's opinion —if he gave it—or given the manuscript to somebody who would speak, for it is very unpleasant to

be so long in the dark, writing to please oneself, without knowing how my system touches others.

You seemed much pleased, and when you examine a subject, I take you for a better judge than Jeffrey. The points really interesting and novel in the Anatomy of Expression never touched him; but as now, he took to the manufacture of the thing only. His observations are, as you say, admirable, and it will be my business to profit by them. To tell you the truth, what you got was my first penning of the subject, and I never could set about altering its arrangement.

Jeffrey, I find, thinks *that* not important which is the very basis of the whole. He would like a beautiful essay better than the most striking fact. Your questions on the margin show how far I have mistaken in not stating the present system of Anatomy. But still I say, if I do it in that way, instead of a short statement of what is new, you will find a long essay and controversy. A wise man, they say, should hear everything, but act according to his own sentiments. I'll try to do this.

Yours ever, my dear George,

C. B.

17*th October*, 1808.

My dear George,

My class goes on most respectably. But I write to tell you of this canvass.* Carlyle has

* For the Professorship of Anatomy to the Royal Academy on Mr. Sheldon's death.

twenty-two votes on starting—thirty-three is the whole number; but, notwithstanding, I am bustling through. A great many people are now moving for me. The *dear* Princesses have been very active; Sidmouth, Whitbread, Sir H. Engelfield, &c. Many of the painters who have given their votes, I suspect now think they were hasty. I have written and said some good things, but nothing in the newspapers. It begins to make a bustle, and will more, or I mistake.

21*st*.

Do you excuse me for writing so little to you on this occasion? You know the reason. First, my class—"A bird in the hand," &c. It goes on well. In my evening lecture, my new seats are stuffed to suffocation. My first and second lectures, as well as my morning lecture, required every moment that I could spare. Then my patients—some new—which are always troublesome at first. Comfort and well-being at home is a great matter, and enables a man to do much abroad. That is the way you get the "Bankrupts," and so, my classes go on well, with firmness and resolution.

Now of the Academy. There was a meeting, or rather there was to have been a meeting, of the Council last night, and I had prepared, rather hurriedly, a *good* letter, which in due time I will send you,—indeed, Johnnie should have transcribed it for this night's post. I say it is a good, moderate, but strong letter, and one point I par-

ticularly urge. Abernethy has said that he had a strong desire of offering himself, but in consideration of my pretensions, waives. So Astley Cooper writes me as strong a letter.* Mr. Wilson wished to stand, too, but Dr. Baillie would not support him, but me. These are the three great schools of London, so I say, "Pause, gentlemen, and do not tell me that Mr. Carlyle has the voice of the Profession," &c.

But there was no Council, so I shall make my good letter better by all kinds of advice and assistance, and print it, for this is a great occasion, and these people acting individually—I mean the lecturers—are raising me to a great height.

Adieu, my dear Brother,

C. B.

5th November, 1808.

My dear George,

It will give you a lively picture of me, to be told there is scarcely anything I have more affection for than the little table on which I write. It follows me thro' the room. I draw it to me as a friend: it contains all my comforts: I am near it, and am at home!

* Astley Cooper writes to Sir W. Beechey—"Bell, of all the men I know, beyond all comparison merits the situation of Professor to the Royal Academy. He adds to a very extended knowledge of anatomy a perfect acquaintance with the principles of painting, and I feel the strongest conviction that if he is elected, he will do infinite credit to himself, and be an invaluable acquisition to the Royal Academicians. If I had the ear of the king, I should tell him he ought not to vote for any other person. Yours, &c., A. C."

17th November, 1808.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You are quite mistaken in supposing that it is necessary to support and comfort me on this occasion.* You say you wish you could be here, not to leave me till I was reconciled to this disappointment. It is by forgetting it, not by conviction of its uselessness, that I satisfy myself.

I am not clear that the canvass will do me good. What the world will speak of is my drawings. I have often been troubled with the perverseness of people attaching merit to the drawings of my book, and closing their eyes altogether on the reasoning.

As to continuing my efforts on the same subject after this, the thing is impossible. You know that this subject cannot have due importance given to it by etchings on the margin of a book, —that it requires a great establishment of casts and models,—that is what I regret. I am quite conscious of possessing a talent in the way of modelling superior to those of many I have visited,—and this is buried.

* * * * *

To think of this as others do is impossible, because they do not see, or are not interested in the subject. But let me be done with this matter —and, if you please, for ever. If there occur anything, I'll tell you about it; if not, the less said the better.

* Mr. Carlyle was elected.

26th November, 1808.

My dear George,

You think it odd I cannot find time to do a hundred things you would have me do. I know I need much to be pushed on. I should be the better of somebody, to do for me as Sir Charles Blicke did for Abernethy—take him in his carriage to the door of a voter, and see him *in*. But my short answer to all this is, that my Classes are likely to be popular; that they are increasing; and that my whole exertion must be in that direction: and having entirely succeeded, then it is like one of Buonaparte's battles—the lesser circumstances will arrange themselves accordingly.

I have thirty-six pupils attending my evening lecture. You may think this few, but you must recollect under what disadvantageous circumstances I began. You must take it into consideration that Carlyle is lecturing to four pupils; that Thomas, who once had a good class in the next street, has knocked under; that Chevalier does not lecture, and that Pearson does not consider it advisable to lecture this year; that Homer gives gratis lectures to the students of St. George's Hospital—twenty-five in number—he much delighted with his attendance. Moreover, Wilson finding that my plan was likely to be against him, has taken it up, and is now giving evening lectures on Surgery, with the assistance of Mr.

Brodie. An overflowing class, then, of thirty-six is not to be grinned at.

I have been making sketches of late in great number, when fatigued with other things. By the bye, my patients are at this time very few, but I am easy on that score. I still propose to send you a sketch; and I have now discovered a pretty way of making slight drawings. . . . .

The post! a very agreeable letter. Thinking of you and your letters, I have almost forgot my hour of lecture.

C. B.

17th December, 1808.

* * * * *

No! it is not all over in Spain. I have bought a map, four feet in diameter, and I am fighting it out bravely. It is let down to my right elbow; and when I get the paper, I am as snug as an old soldier who feels his comforts by the contrast.

John Shaw is hearty—busy—well. Did I ever tell you I was offered 100*l.* a-year for the use of my name? But I thought they would dirty it, so I would not lend it. It was to stick on the first leaf of a journal.

Yours ever, C. B.

C. BELL TO MRS. G. J. BELL.

No date.

My dear Sister,

I turn from my labours to converse with you; but remember how unprofitable a dialogue is which is *all on one side.*

I went to the Opera on Saturday, that I might tell you of Catalani. She has a moderately handsome figure, and a pretty enough face, but nothing of the dignity, the truth, and affecting simplicity of Grassini. Her voice, however, is beyond the utmost stretch of imagination, beautiful. From the utmost pitch of her voice, playing with the greatest facility, she will drop it into a note so low and sweet as to call forth raptures of applause. Her notes are unlike anything I have ever heard; they have a distinctness and accuracy quite wonderful, as if struck from an instrument; but one unfortunate circumstance spoils all my feelings—there is a perpetual smile on her face, like that of a dancer. In singing these words, "Duolo spavento amor," (?) the smile is given to the first, when you *know* it might be better on the last; so to those not understanding the language the stroke of the poniard is rather unexpected: so far for Catalani.

I was lately, on a Saturday evening, going to the play, and found that I had not my opera-glass. I went into a pawnbroker's shop to hire an opera-glass for the evening—a very curious scene presented itself. About a dozen of women, ragged and squalid, some of them good-looking—one of them young and beautiful—were getting one Sunday more of their former finery. In some of these shops business is carried on on a great scale. The poor creature who delivers the goods or finery in pawn gets a ticket, and one

corresponding to it is hung on a cord which communicates with the warehouse where she goes on a Saturday evening to redeem her clothes; the shopman pulls this cord, and the article is sent down. It is impossible to conceive the misery which these shops present: and they are in every street. In this immense place new scenes perpetually occur; the crowds, the streams of human existence, the bustle, the little petty importance of the men's faces is very amusing—the beauty and neatness of the women is something more than amusing. When I am free of cares myself I am not without gratification in a walk thro' some of the crowded streets.

I have just come from Sydney Smith's; the party stupid, excepting one beautiful Frenchwoman. She looked sense and intelligence, but spoke not. In my own opinion, I think I have a good judgment of what is admirable in women?

Catalani's husband is found to be a spy; he is to be sent out of the country, and will not go without his wife. This is probably a story; but to me there is nothing improving in her, and therefore I do not regret it. She sometimes sings out of tune. I wish I had you at the Opera, were I not afraid you would dislike the short petticoats and the fine limbs. The pit holds 1500 people; the boxes seem to ascend into the skies; the orchestra, the scenery, are grand; but were you ever to step behind the scenes and see the dismal place, the painted

wretches, it is all delusion—or rather, delusion no more. I should never wish to have a woman I loved (if the purity of the passion comes near what I imagine it might, could, or should be), in this place—her ears, her eyes exposed to such—Lord knows what!

Farewell,

C. B.

CHAPTER VII.

The Wounded from Corunna—Haslar Hospital—Burning of Drury Lane Theatre—Painting in Oil—Walter Scott—Critiques on Mrs. Siddons—Fee-book—Scotland—O. P. Riots—Jubilee—Scarlet Fever.

1809.

22nd January, 1809.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

When I am unseated and removed from my fireside, my memory returns in strength and frequency to you. I think and have thought almost continually of your folks to-day, and the reason is I am on the wing! Where? To Plymouth to see these fine fellows.*

This has been a great and unfortunate business. They seem to have fought nobly; but, in truth, I have no news.

The weather is most unfortunate. The hackney-coaches are slowly dragged with four horses through the snow; in walking, you plunge into holes that take you up to the knee. But I am resolved not to let this occasion slip as I did that of Nelson. I went to the Medical Board; they were glad I thought of going. They offered me the care of the hospital, but I told them that I

* The wounded, just brought home from Corunna.

must be free, and that I must soon return to my lectures.

Wednesday.

Instead of Plymouth I go to Portsmouth, from which I'll write to you.

Adieu,
C. B.

3rd February, 1809.
HASLAR HOSPITAL.

"Who goes there?" "A friend!" "Countersign?" "Spain!" "Pass, friend; all is well!"

Such is the frequent call under my window. I am in the most comfortable and elegant apartments in the house of the agent, and most courteously and friendly entertained by all here. I wish I had written to you during my first sensations—these were, I trust, such as every good man should feel; they are blunted by repetition, and I hate myself for being what I am—so mere a creature like the rest, going about my common affairs. I have muttered bitter curses and lamentations, have been delighted with the heroism and prowess of my countrymen, and shed tears of pity in the course of a few minutes. I find myself, my dear George, in a situation unexpected and strange, such as I hope you may never see. I have stooped over hundreds of wretches in the most striking variety of woe and misery, picking out the wounded. Each day as I awake, still I see the long line of sick and lame slowly moving from the beach: it seems to have

no end. There is something in the interrupted and very slow motion of these distant objects singularly affecting.

LEICESTER STREET, Wednesday.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You see where I am after a strange time: some difficulty in travelling, from the waters being out. I find myself a foot taller. Shame upon the fellows who did not take my example to learn their profession.

I know nothing of Portsmouth. I was only one hour out of the hospital, and came away at eleven o'clock at night. I know nothing but what the world is well acquainted with—that all our soldiers are heroes, and that our generals are fools. I speak undoubtedly from the impression of a dispirited and harassed army; yet there is a show of sense that looks like truth.

I have yours to-day. I congratulate you on the elasticity of your spirits, that can see comfort in the success of our arms in Spain. Your thought had struck me. I said to myself, there is one thing on which the tactician should lay the foundation of his system: the superiority of a British battalion to that of France is more evident when they are brought into contact than of an English seventy-four to one of France. But what mortifies me is the conviction of the want of head, the total want of genius in these military gentlemen, and still they will attempt to imitate

the French, as they did the Prussians, without an idea that imitators are necessarily inferior. Now, the French will not fight in the dark; don't, then, fight in the day, but only in the dark; do anything but imitate their sharp-shooting and rapid evolutions.

These fine fellows whom I have lately left are quite conscious that they fought well, but to no purpose, from the incapacity somewhere. I hear a great deal of Sir John Moore here, but nothing among the soldiers. I know him to be, from direct information, a good soldier and a proper independent man; but he has done nothing. Say it has not been his fortune! I believe it. His death particularly struck me as implying a noble mind. Yet I say he has done nothing, and this retreat was disorderly and disastrous. Had they destroyed the bridge at Lugo they would have gained many days, but, tho' part of the army had marched over it in the advance, there was no means taken to secure its destruction; and in the attempt to blow it up, they only blew up themselves. Another bridge was partly destroyed, but, as they left the pillars, the French threw some planks over, and in two hours galloped across it!

Then the men assure me they marched five times over the same ground. In their retreat they had nothing provided for them. After starving for two days they got rum to comfort them; no sooner were they halted to eat than

they were forced off the ground where, they say, they might have had leisure enough—for when they formed the French stopped, and had they been halted and supplied, their retreat would have been on the whole much quicker. The disorders of the soldiers were shocking. I found a fellow with a stocking full of dollars, and another with a silver spoon under his pillow; the rogue grinned, and said he took it from a Spaniard.

But, to say the truth, I confined my inquiry entirely to the object for which I went, and in that my highest wishes have been gratified. I was quite resolved to do nothing to raise the suspicions of those amongst whom I was. I did not attach myself to officers; how could you think I should? I attended Colonel Maxwell, but it was as a *case*, and accidental. MacLeay, however, has made me write an account of him—for what purpose I know not.

I have got some noble specimens of injured bones, and a series of cases admirably fitted for lectures, better for my Surgery—I mean my Second Edition. My knowledge gives me confidence, and I see that all kinds of people are aware of the spirit in which I carry things.

C. B.

15th.

If you will take such accommodation as I gave you last year, we are always ready for you. You must not prevent me going to Scotland, tho'.

25th February ? 1809.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You cannot form an idea of the bustle and difficulty I live in—difficulty of writing or doing anything well. John Cheyne,* who is with me, says my house is like a "*Cried fair!*" Somebody knocks, and he runs. He thinks himself safely lodged in the back room, and they are upon him from both doors. I have been unable to carry out my good resolutions of rising in the morning, for I have of late been agreeably occupied, and while I have been busy in the day, I have been junketting by night. I have been at three dances lately. Last night the occasion was very different: the spectacle of a burning theatre, in which performance they are now perfect. Drury Lane still kept up its superiority. I saw it (the fire) from the top of the market-houses in Covent Garden. The flame rose perpendicularly. Its base was the immense theatre, the height exceeding the space from the top of the theatre to the ground, and above and around the *intense* flame the most beautiful colours played from the burning of the paint of the scenery; these colours changed like the colours of the prism—blue, light green, and red. You have seen a fire and the dark sky illuminated? but here the sky was æthereal blue, and the whole scene as in the face of day, unless when you looked to the black walls and the burning

* Dr. Cheyne, of Dublin.

heart of the great furnace. The lesser objects one sees in the day furnish out sources to our more sublime imagining in sleep. I scarcely ever saw a fire in my life before, yet this seemed somehow to me not unusual, tho' the mind was kept on the stretch, and the very remembrance of it is terrific. Perhaps you have seen a gate open in the sky, and from under the lofty towers squadrons of horse advance; or you may have seen in your dreams the distant walls of a lofty city all on fire? Such was the feeling of the time, for it left no thought for the place you stood in or the things and creatures around you. The front in perspective was 490 feet. The fire did not rage from the windows and betwixt the pillars, but within there was a deep, white, and intense burning, while the flame rose majestically above.

In the recollection of it I feel nothing like reality, only as if I had been fortunate in a dream, and, like you, were telling it at breakfast in swelling words which laboured with the imperfect thought.

22nd April, 1809.

My dear George,

I feel quite out of the habit of writing.* I know not how to sit down to talk to you in this fashion. My matters go on much as they did. The weather has been terrible: the snow lay deep for the greater part of yesterday. I have seen

* Written after a short visit from G. J. Bell.

Sandford * often; he speaks of you as in great business. He proposes to go over "Homer," with the view of giving me very accurate descriptions of the wounds and manner of death of Homer's heroes. I think this will be a very good thing.

18th May.

I have etched several of my plates of gunshot wounds. They will be very fine, I think. I have got into the use of the needle. It is better to make these sketches good than to publish on the Anatomy of Painting. Will you pay for some of my proofs coming down?

Amongst other things I have in my time of relaxation been occupied by the dissection of a lioness. I made a lecture of it, and have been drawing from it, and some painters being busy over it, I have been tempted occasionally to take up the brush, so I shall either send you a sketch in oil, of the head, as large as life, or the body, in small, with the idea of a landscape. . . . .

I have painted my noble beast for you. If rapidity of execution were a merit, that would be additional; but I send it as my first painting in oil colour. At any rate, I am sure you would be gratified to see my paintings of gun-shot wounds.

They make a valuable addition to my collection, which is slowly increasing. If you object to this lion, remember it is a *study*, an accurate copy of

* Bishop of Edinburgh.

the dead beast in a pasture, and that the ground, for I can scarcely call it a landscape, was put in afterwards. I understand that Susan, the housemaid, says that it looks "so spiteful," and that it is the picture of the beast she once dreamed had a hold of her. It will answer to frighten the children.

One of my pupils is among the literary, or rather the scientific, class of my profession, as they would like to be considered, and I understand that they entertain an extraordinary opinion of my retiredness. Some consider it as a trick to get on, thus standing aloof from all, neither entering the Royal Society, when I know it must be open to me, nor mixing with their societies; others, that it is pride, &c.

This idea, I must confess, is new to me. It is certainly better that it should be thus, than that they should wonder at what I have to do among them. What pleases me most, is, that I am not now considered an intruder.

23rd May, 1809.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

. . . . . I don't know you as the head of a family,* for I, as you know, in some measure disputed that title of dignity with you. As you say, the recollection of "Miss Shaw" will be gone before I see and know "*Barbara.*" I have a great friendship for Miss Marion, and hope

* George's second daughter, Charles's favourite niece, was born on the 3rd of May, 1809.

she will be with you when I visit you. It will be delightful to be in the house with the better order of beings in it, in contrast with this monkish life. All that I have yet seen of English ladies—only obscurely—still serves to confirm me in the belief that they are perfection in form and mildness of spirit; something so calm and serene, so soft and ladylike, yet so dignified—toll de roll . . . !

I must not go on at this rate, else the wounded at Corunna may go hang. Is it not better not to write at all, than to write such stuff?

I dined with Lynn yesterday, a fresh cloudy day; old ideas, a remembrance of old times—are these times really old? Richardson and I walked down. All my patients doing tolerably well—necessary to go down to the City to see one. Went also to Chelsea to converse with my gun-shot men; expect thirty-two of the Corunna army to-morrow.

I have made out a great deal of principle, and have cases, or rather instances, to illustrate every point. It is singular that they should let me take this step. I am so much improved in my etching, that I have rejected my first plates. I have bought etchings by the best old masters, and have hung them around me; they will prevent my being little and feeble.

You and Raeburn mistake the matter when you think it possible to become a drawer with the brush. The faculty of producing effect is learned, and the painter never returns to the elements

again. Look to an old portrait, such as I have before me—look into the rude engravings of the early schools, they are hard but faithful, and full of character—and everything is defined. Turn to a modern painter, one would be tempted to think that they never had an outline but "sketched with the brush," and you will no doubt discern a solicitude to avoid a distinct line, so that the circumference of all the objects, and especially their figures, are shaded off and indistinct.

Tuesday.

I have got your scolding letter to-day. You tell me to cultivate men; I wish you had said, to be industrious and cultivate a proud spirit of independence. You think of the men you mention as my superiors, and I think you wrong. My object of life is fulfilled as far as my years permit. —— is only an amicable expectant, who has as yet disappointed the hopes of his friends. He has been creeping into a situation, instead of proudly taking his seat. Think better of this, my dear brother, and when you are unsuccessful, or think yourself passed over, it will be a comfort to you to reflect on this as I do. The only virtues in the present state of society are industry and independence. My poverty is sometimes distressing, but only on certain occasions when my character outruns my means.

* * * * *

27th May.

When we talk of abilities being so essentially

necessary to ministers, and the languor of the country from seeing the absolute want of it, we naturally turn to the Wellesleys; and if this state of the war in Germany continue, the Marquis and Sir Arthur, in Spain, will gain golden opinions of the country, and come home fresh when we are all sick of the political post-horses.

Is it not natural to suppose that these will be the men? . . . I hear the horns announcing victory, and I'll buy you a paper.

I have just got your letter. I ask you again, have you seen my second volume? I was just now called down to reduce a dislocated thumb, which I did on principle, with great ease. See "Bell's Surgery," vol. ii.

Don't you know that I am going to write on gun-shot wounds? I thought I had told you. Thus it is. I intended to make an appendix of gun-shot wounds, and in my second edition to throw that part of my Surgery and the cases together into a complete treatise; but the booksellers wish it to be published separately, and I wish to make these sketches better than the "Anatomy of Painting," and so you will find me the author of a book of very interesting cases, with, I expect, fine etchings. I am in the meantime not neglecting my other work.

To-morrow I'll send your book, and some proofs of soldiers' legs and hands. I am taking the least important subjects until I get in my hand.

To-day I dine with Alexander, Campbell,* and Walter Scott, at Richardson's.

Saturday.

Our dinner was, indeed, very pleasant, and I suppose there never were five people met of more distinct character and occupations. I am inclined to like Scott; he is certainly a very pleasant fellow. Alexander, wise and good, and with more spirit and manliness than I had imagined. Campbell quite ridiculous, and I cannot but think poor in common sense and good honourable feeling—feeling of another cast he has in great perfection.

10th June, 1809.

My bones engraved! Not a touch of them. Engraving could never do that; besides, they will not cost me one pound a-piece. Engraving would have been at the rate of six guineas; though a splendid book, it will be cheap and circulate wide. I have made two drawings of the trunk wounds in the breast, which I think you will like. Landseer, the engraver, I applied to for specimens of etching; but he said the manner, which was my own, had an excellent effect, and was free from affectation. But I know that by having good things beside me I improve. I have, however, failed in my last.

You understand that this "first letter" which I have sent you, is one of three or four. . . . . I am writing my second, which is on Spasm.

* Alexander, afterwards Chief Baron Alexander. Campbell the poet.

. . . . The drawing of my last etching is, I think, perfectly correct, but I shall have better things. Why do you not tell me of Mrs. Siddons? Are you taking my method with her? It would be thought priggish and conceited, in Edinburgh, perhaps. Jeffrey saw my Shakspeare, and liked it much, and talked to Mrs. Siddons about it. I said that I intended some time to take a good play which is never acted, and mark it so *in fancy*. He said he should like to do so too. He saw your pencillings on the margin; not knowing whether you would like it, and not knowing what they were, I told him they were all mine; so perhaps his liking the kind of thing was owing to you. Do not forget to pursue it.*

21st June.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

In about six weeks I think I shall be with you, and since I have allowed my mind to dwell upon the probability, my desire of revisiting my friends has become quite ungovernable, and now, come what will, what may, I will be with you soon.

I had breakfast early and went to the York Hospital, which is at Chelsea, you know; there I made sketches, &c., till one, and since that time I have been at the Marquis of Stafford's; so that you may look for a critique some day soon.

* These marked plays have, with the exception of one volume, which contained "Macbeth," been preserved. That volume, the one of greatest consequence, could not be found after Charles Bell's death. Those with George's notes are still extant.

30th.

I escaped from my morning business, and have been all day in the York Hospital. On coming home I find six letters, three of which are exceeding good, as one contains a fee, the other a request from a gentleman near Newcastle, that I should accept his nephew as a house pupil in October; and the other, and best, from my good brother, one lenient to all my failings.

I am doing myself much good by being so much among the army surgeons; whenever there is anything going on, there they find me, and always in at the death. A staff-surgeon told me this morning that he hoped to attend my lectures in the winter, as he understood they were full of reasoning, and quite different from the others. This you must not suppose a quiz, for the head surgeon in the York Hospital intends the same thing from the same motives. Dr. Jackson, an old army physician, and I, have been like dogs in a leash. He is a good and a much abused man; but being as much engaged in prosecuting enquiries regarding the medical facts exemplified in the army hospitals, as I have been in my special enquiries, we come together like two corks in a basin. He is the propagator of this good character of me. All this is to the ear of a brother!

I dine with Lynn to-day. Five words which were often found in my early letters, and which show you I never quit or am quitted by a friend. . . . . My profession and a few friends con-

stitute my world, as you know every man has a world of his own.

I am quite clear that posthumous reputation is an absolute good.

•

21*st July*, 1809.

DEAR GEORGE,

My little red book says now 990*l.*: D.'s fee will make it 1000*l.* That's a comfortable reflection to come down to Scotland with. After a man has secured that, final success as to making money must depend on himself.

I am making my front parlour very fine—that is, I hope it will be on my return. Don't you think I have some merit in putting up with things? If the letters I wrote to you on coming into this house did not convey something like comfort in the midst of desolation, they must be proofs of how much I have done. I would rather stand in the front of the *tête du pont*, between the hostile armies on the Douro, than encounter another such *entré* into London.

The only relic now of poor Slater is in the last affectionate letter which he wrote to me. He and Scogan, honest fellow, the first patient I ever had, and afterwards my good friend, are now certainly lost. Slater, of all the young men I have had, was the most of my own forming, the most truly deserving of esteem, and the most attached to me. Cut off in the very entrance, with a spirit to enjoy the world, abilities and

pleasant qualities to ensure success, and lead to all the endearments of life!

I have been reading the delightful little *nouvelle historique*, "Mdlle. de Clermont," which almost reconciles me to your notion of female authors; but in the other stories there is so much of gentlemen weeping and kissing lap-dogs, and overflowing in sentiment, that I cannot admire Mdme. de Genlis in general.

I have finished my work, and actually put my shirts into my portmanteau—pleasing task! I have been reading much—idle stories—and am as full of romance as at eighteen. This I think a great good. It is this same pliability of spirit which makes us always young.

Yours, C. B.

LIVERPOOL, 18*th August*, 1809.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

While the distant Pentlands were in sight, I was still with you, heard you, and saw you; but still I was a weary wight. Landscape and sky perfectly lovely, over which a certain sinking of the spirits gave an indefinable charm, became totally obscured; and when we came to the high, heathy ground, the clouds closed in, and the red forked lightning played around us. I lost sight of you; but I wish I had a portion of my former close-working spirit again, for even the little things about me, making a part of you, carry me back amongst you, and make me unfit for exertion.

You and I must travel this road together some day. Would the day were come, for, till I see you again, I suffer banishment.

Liverpool is ——. But what have you to do with it? Besides, I am not three hours here. I am in Dr. Renwick's. Dr. Renwick and Brandreth are both absent.

I hate these mails and inns—that is, when I am going south. This has been a happy journey. Now I know you and yours; I can converse with you, scold my aunt for being "only twelve years old," kiss your dear wife, and frighten the children! Was not this the avowed reason of my coming among you? All my duties but those of affection I can do here. . . . .

I fear I may have appeared a strange, insensible fellow, but I did all for the best. The great duties of life are easily performed, but the lesser virtues puzzle us. . . . .

Wednesday.

I have seen a great many doctors and surgeons, and it is somewhat agreeable, in the absence of better feelings, to find the reward of one's labour in the easy acquaintance of so great a proportion of people. They are uniformly polite, and, when their tempers are good, kind and free. Your dull brother, my dear George, on these occasions exerts himself. This I know you won't believe. . . . .

Adieu. Ever yours,

C. B.

Oh! for time to write out my Brain! It *shall be good.* I won't publish, though. Does this look like a man very unhappy?

2nd October, 1809.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I received a letter from you this morning—exceedingly agreeable. But you do not want praise, but news of me. I proceed well. I have refused, unwillingly, the son of an hospital physician—this, before my class begins, is progress—in expectation of our good little fellow from Ayr, in whom I am more bound up, from the prospect of losing him,* and no doubt from being the brother of your two "dears." Hitherto, what I liked of him was himself. He has been a great want. I don't know where to find my lectures: he had a sharp eye after my bits of paper.

I wonder that I never wrote to you of our new Theatre. I wished you to have been with me to have heard the many-headed monster roar.† The theatre is very fine, but that you will see. On ascending the stair, you felt a vibration, and heard a noise—such a noise as never was heard before. If Gulliver in Brobdingnag had put his ear to a beehive, such a din he might faintly have conceived.

When I came opposite to a box-door, the full cry opened upon me; but still it was incompre-

* John Shaw had been alarmingly ill.

† On occasion of the O. P. (old price) riots on the re-opening of Covent Garden Theatre.

hensible, of which you may be satisfied when you are told that a dozen hawkers' horns, watchmen's rattles, cat-calls, bells innumerable, fifes, and clarionets, were undistinguishable in the general bray; when four-and-twenty fiddlers were seen to move their elbows with great expedition, and yet not a note was heard, not the faintest sound of music. When I first went in, I thought that the noise must of course soon cease, but the perseverance of the thing was the most unaccountable; and then to see the whole audience, or rather people, simply sitting quietly and comfortably on, and piping, and blowing, and roaring, without a movement of gesticulation, sitting as if by enchantment. Now and then, to be sure, you might see an inflamed face hanging from the side of a pillar, the eyes straining, the nostrils and mouth open, the jaws moving, but no sound. The circumstance the most worthy of observation, was the character of the actors as now displayed.

My dear George, I have taken a great deal of money to-day. It is literally lying in heaps, which I have not sorted yet. I have just come down from my introductory lecture, and all goes well. This has been a day of business, and now we live merrily, merrily. I have that kind of rest of the mind which I have not known, at such a time, for years.

30th.

I write to you, and yet I declare I have no disposition to it. To-night, as most nights, I have

been engaged till I am like a candle in a socket. These fourteen hours I have been hard at work of some kind or other, having made a point to study for both my lectures. I am exceedingly troubled with my servants. I have made a complete clearance; and at such a time as this, with new pupils coming, to be seeking servants is very unpleasant. . . . .

As to myself, I am living very economically—of necessity indeed, being so much occupied. Who was he who would have his house built at the bottom of the hill, that all the world might see him? It is so with me. Every hole and corner of this great house is occupied, and there is neither rest nor privacy. But let me do my young men justice—they are excellent creatures.

Wednesday.

The Jubilee! Although John Bull is very weak on such an occasion as this, Scotchmen, I fear, are mean; and many in Edinburgh will be making much of this matter. At the last Jubilee, Edward humbled the power of France, and extended the dominion of England. Now we rejoice that France prevails. In our besotted pride, we hold a Jubilee for reasons we dare not enquire into.

My skeletons hold a festival and rejoicing, and how I am to marshal them is still my trouble. To-day I would have taken a walk into the country, but for an operation I have to do at three o'clock; and in the evening I must sit like an old maid, and watch candles!

In faith, I may close this letter here, for I have nothing to say, unless I speak to you of my occupations and studies, lectures, patients, and corrections of books from the great book of Nature.

When you send me a letter, let it be written at intervals, and in moods varying with occasions. If the sound of a bell varies to the ear of sentiment in the morning, mid-day, and evening, how will a letter vary?

C. B.

9th November, 1809.

* * * * *

I am willing to combat one point with you. You say that no man can rise into great practice without being in company, or, rather, say society. I do not agree with you. Pardon my vanity, when I say that my business comes thro', and will increase by, different means. My patients are now of a proper class, whom I know nothing of. They come from my character, and are retained by finding relief, by being treated with attention and kindness. My means of being known are through my books and pupils: I retain my consequence by preferring science to practice. My chief gratification is in the cultivation of my profession, and I have still some great schemes to be brought forward. Those with whom I stand contrasted are making perhaps 9000*l.* a-year. What does that imply? The pursuit of science, perhaps? Pooh! pooh!

My day runs thus:—Rise unwillingly to break-

fast; ten to eleven I am *at home;* a strange, interrupted time from twelve to two, the principal thing, studying to improve my lectures and composing my books;—perhaps obliged to go out before lecture;—from two to half-past three lecture—often somebody waiting below; see my patients till dinner-time. In the afternoon we sit congregated, a cheerful but silent company. I am employed in reading French authors chiefly, improving my Surgery, and making additions to my Anatomy for a new edition, which is immediately wanted.

When there is an evening lecture there is more bustle, but that one subject proceeds. I correct proofs; I make preparations; and I am, if not happy, not discontented. I must love people, before I break up this plan of life, to give my time to them. . . .

I wish you would turn your eye, as you look over your books, to Medical Police. I intend at my leisure to compose some concluding lectures to my Surgery on violent death. I have by me a good French book on the subject. . . . .

I had an offer yesterday of being surgeon to the new Dispensary, of which Sir Samuel Romilly, Scarlett, and the Duke of something are patrons; but I think you will not be angry with me for refusing this with a salary? I feel myself very strong—getting strong in friends.

9th December.

I think I told you that I was kept busy, by

having all my usual time of relaxation occupied by revising books for reprinting. But last night I took a long pull at the subject of my most anxious contemplation, "The Brain," and so heated myself with it, that at half-past two I had no more disposition to sleep than now.

All my patients are warlike—eight officers. . . . . I shall be very bloody in this Brain of mine. I must make experiments, and that is what I hate to do.

11th December.

John Shaw is attacked by scarlet-fever to-day. Dr. Maton is attending him.

16th December, 1809.

In the afternoon and evening of yesterday Johnnie was considerably worse. . . . . Every thing goes well but this sad business, and that makes all else vain and trifling.

I could not be at the trouble of giving my lecture last night. I daresay you were wont to receive my letters with a cheerful satisfaction. You must put your mind *by* that for a little time, I fear, and seek your comforts at home. Maton has just left me: the disease is certainly heavy, but nothing worse. I have, however, sent for Baillie.

26th December, 1809.

A happy Christmas to you, my dear fellow, and to your whole family, not forgetting auntie, the best Christmas figure of you all. . . . . .

I received your letter at a time when I thought it likely to go hard with Johnnie,—his strength suddenly gone, his senses wandering, and his skin scarlet. I had till then been in the same room with him, and I have a load of cold upon me.*

I am delighted to find your book a source of comfortable reflection to you. It was well to make it a handsome quarto. It looks well and honest in the face, like its author.

Speaking of books, could you get a little *tiny book* printed for me, of twenty pages of the smallest 12mo? † for I must send you down the manuscript of the Brain again, stated shortly for my friends.

* The first symptom of his having taken the infection.

† "The New Idea of the Brain," which was afterwards printed in London, instead of Edinburgh, for private circulation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Illness—Pleasant Delirium—Experiments on the Nerves—Beefsteak Club—Windham—Burdett Riots—Windham's Death—Reminiscences addressed to Miss Shaw.

1810.

6th January, 1810.

MY DEAR GEORGE, MY DEAREST BROTHER,

After some days of delirium and great suffering, this is the first comfortable time in which I can twist round my elbow into the writing posture. When I wrote to you on Saturday a short note I was ill, but had no idea of anything serious. There was only a little tumour and sharp pain of my right tonsil, but in six hours it was ulcerated, and I was fairly to stand the chance in this disease which, to your fancy, as well as my own, is so terrible. The delirium was mild, and such as I could at all times shake off by insisting on the nurse letting me out of bed and sitting snugly by the fire. I could observe that every fancy which occurred to me had its proper and correct origin and progress. But a consciousness of loss of intellect, and being pettled in the hands of women, and soothed like a child, is *at first* very unpleasant.

* * * * *

It is most strange to me that I was not highly interested about you and your thoughts of me; but neither, my dear friend, did I care for myself; for when Dr. Mayo shook the nurse by the arm and told her by — to take care that she plied him with his wine and bark, &c., or he would die, it was a piece of information rather awkward, and, you'll say, ill-timed,—no, well-timed, for it was the time that made it indifferent to me.

To-day I ought to be able to write, but I am more inclined to sleep still. John has gone to his ride. Dr. Baillie has been always very good: Maton most attentive: Mayo after his way. He has been making experiments to get where he thinks there is still some mishap behind my palate. I know there is not, but I have no objection to smoke. .

Continued by John Shaw.

He has been smoking, and liked it well enough. It is not tobacco, but a mixture of herbs, rose-leaves, &c., which make a very pleasant smell in the room. He is getting on as quickly as they could wish.

He sleeps a great deal; his most comfortable position is with his arm round my neck, his head on my shoulder.

8th January, 1810.

My dear George,

I have just determined to write six lines, and no more, to tell you I am better. I have, by the

kindness of friends, all sorts of good advice, good things, and good wine. No, you could not have nursed me better had I been with you. But I might have suffered more in the presence of those dear to me.

Now that I find myself getting well quickly, I am in the course of receiving your desponding letters. No, thank God, there is no occasion for your coming here; and, indeed, it would be in you a singular dereliction of duty to leave those with whom you are for such an occasion. Lynn comes in with his new eggs and his keg of milk in a very pleasant way; raw eggs and milk, you know how I would relish such food. Cooper, Abernethy, and all my true friends have been very attentive. I have dismissed my nurse, finding her no longer necessary. Is not that good news?

10th January, 1810.

My dear George,

It goes to my heart to see you so miserable; but long ere this you are satisfied we have a long life of comfort before us. To-day I have been down and finished at once an excellent sketch, in oils, of a gunshot wound.

To-morrow I go to Hampstead—John and I. There we shall drink, and walk, and read, and have visitors—John Richardson, no doubt. Poor fellow, he has actually drooped since my illness. The most distressing thing in your letter to-day is your speaking of want of money. To be sure

everybody wants money. This should be my harvest, but it won't. This unfortunate illness has much injured my prospects. I would have taken a good deal of money if I had been on my feet. But this is only a casual interruption. Adieu, I feel quite well. Precaution, more than necessity, takes me to the country; for before I lecture again I have much anatomical work to do; and that I won't do till quite in strength.

13th January, 1810.

HAMPSTEAD.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Here we are a few short hours free of the bustle and bad air of the great city, already at home, dined and warmed by good fires, and a generous glass of wine. . . . . I confess my philosophy was completely put to flight when, imagining myself about to sit down to delightful reading, I found that John had neglected to bring the books and papers—thought only of the soup and wine. However, this evening, the first of my retirement, has long been dedicated to you. You think too deeply and write too strongly of this illness of mine. You quite terrify me. The physicians made a distinction between fever and that irritation on the constitution, the effect of local disease. Thus my skin and tongue offered good indications, while my throat was very bad. As to the delirium, it was never such as you suppose; especially the first nights, it was rather agreeable. A painter, with a look of self-gratulation, seemed to place

his piece on an easel; another, with an air of superiority, displaced the first and substituted his own style; a third frowned and terrified the last, until, in rapid succession, I saw the finest pieces of history, the most romantic scenery—banditti, ruins, aqueducts. Still I had selfish feeling enough to know that this was all imagination, and indicated some exuberance of fancy in which I indulged. By-and-by the same process of fancy became less airy and light in what it exhibited. I seemed to be among legs and arms; a dressing-gown, hanging in a corner, was a figure in a frowning or contemptuous attitude; a fold of the bed-clothes gave the idea of a limb, to which I added what was necessary to the figure. Every absurdity of my imagination I observed to have a distinct origin in the impression on the sense. When the light was vivid, the candles and fire burning bright, the truth of sensation corrected all aberrations. In total darkness, too, I was free of false perception; but in the obscure light of the rushlight on that grey canvas, that seemed to be drawn across the vision by the shutting of my eyelids, the reflex sensation perpetually exhibited the most romantic scenes, or the richest ornaments, or the gayest festoons of flowers. Such is the history of my delirium which has given you, my dear brother, so great uneasiness.

* * * * *

Biography is, beyond all other kinds of reading,

delightful, and the proof of it is the pleasure one has in perusing this long garrulous narrative of Gibbon's Life. In the matter of the book, there is nothing to admire. In Gibbon, as a boy, there is nothing amiable; in his progress to manhood, there is no warmth of affection, no youthful enthusiasm, no attachment to his place of nativity, or to his parents or friends, or to his country. He is weak enough to adopt another country (in my opinion a great crime, defective patriotism, leading to confusion and conquest), to affect to write in another language, to be the only Englishman who could write French like a Frenchman (in his circumstances not a merit). He receives a place of emolument for a silent vote in Parliament, which he quits with regret because it must diminish the comforts of his house in town. I'll even go further, and venture to say that the liberality of the historian is not the offspring of reason and philosophy, but a more common and vulgar consequence of the bigot subdued and confuted. He falls first on one side, and then on the other, until, by experience, he is able to stand upright and walk without his go-cart. But don't you think he still retains a kind of resentment, which breaks out in sarcasm and irony? It is curious to observe how Gibbon has been goaded on by ambition. May I not say that I have been swayed and mastered by the same kind of ambitious desire of excelling? I have, even in my present sickness, been intent on the idea of some

great work. Sometimes I think of finishing my anatomy of the muscles in painting in great style. I have had thoughts of entering on a great work of pathology. The Brain I wish still to resume, after giving out a short account of my view as taken from my lectures. It was this which I proposed you to print in Edinburgh. In short, this inertion of body has stirred up ambitious projects. . . . .

16th January, 1810.

HAMPSTEAD.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Here I enjoy existence, and though the thermometer be below freezing some fifteen degrees, we are warm and comfortable. . . . . Richardson dined here on Sunday, and by his presence identified this as home. He has, indeed, been miserable on my account, and says he felt that he could not have gone on had I dropped.

It gives me great pleasure to find you gratified by the progress of your work. Your liberal spirit and genuine sense, so long and arduously occupied on the subject, must make it eminently and conspicuously an acquisition. I must have a copy, remember.

Wednesday.

You tell me to give you a picture of Hampstead. You forget it is not always summer—we are covered in deep snow. Yesterday I thought to take a walk. I followed one of the pretty lanes which lead out of the town; gradually the

beaten road forsook me, then the print of feet was lost, and I was led into the inclosures, where, grinning with clenched teeth to the blast, I could only see a continuity of snow, beyond which, through the murky air, the sun hung like a globe of dull fire. I could not, for the soul of me, persuade myself that it was pleasant, and turned home again.

Friday evening.

I got through my lecture to admiration, though I say it: but of students, I don't much like the appearance. Much stronger to-day; my throat held out the hour and a quarter.

12th March, 1810.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I write to tell you that I really think I am going to establish my Anatomy of the Brain on facts the most important that have been discovered in the history of the science.

You recollect that I have entertained the idea that the parts of the brain were distinct in function, and that the cerebrum was in a particular manner the organ of mind, and this from other circumstances than what I am now to detail to you.

It occurred to me that as there were four grand divisions of the brain, so were there four grand divisions of the spinal marrow; first, a lateral division, then a division into the back and forepart. Next it occurred to me that all the spinal nerves had within the sheath of the spinal marrow two roots—one from the back part,

another from before. Whenever this occurred to me I thought that I had obtained a method of inquiry into the function of the parts of the brain.

Experiment 1. I opened the spine and pricked and injured the *posterior* filaments of the nerves —no motion of the muscles followed. I then touched the *anterior* division—immediately the parts were convulsed.

Experiment 2. I now destroyed the posterior part of *the spinal marrow* by the point of a needle—no convulsive movement followed. I injured the anterior part, and the animal was convulsed.

It is almost superfluous to say that the part of the spinal marrow having sensibility comes from the cerebrum ; the posterior and insensible part of the spinal marrow belongs to the cerebellum.

Taking these facts as they stand, is it not most curious that there should be thus established a distinction in the parts of a *nerve*, and that a nerve should be insensible? But then, as the foundation of a great system, if I can but sustain them by repeated experiments, I am made, and a real gratification ensured for a large portion of my existence.*

An officer called yesterday with a wound in the arm. I touched it off with amazing expe-

* This letter is very important, as showing the date of the first series of experiments on the roots of the spinal nerves.

dition in oil colours. My sketches of gun-shot wounds surpass my expectation, and will form a valuable part of my museum.

I had yesterday the honour of being asked to take wine with the Duke of Sussex—no less a person—and to *chat* with the Duke of Clarence and the Duke of Norfolk. Not to keep you in suspense, I dined at the Beef-steak Club, where there were many great men.

Finding myself thus unexpectedly situated, with my pale face and black coat, and knowing the lean of these princes, I gave *the Chancellor of Oxford*, and passed for a staunch supporter of the Grenville interest there, which was well received. *Clarence* saying (observe the familiarity), "Mr. Bell, I hold a good toast to be better than a good song, and I drink this with particular pleasure." The manners of the princes are certainly admirable, but it must be easier to be a polite prince than a polished gentleman. The Duke of Sussex is like his Majesty; there is in his face a straining and projecting of the mouth, and starting forward of the eyes, which is certainly majestical; his body huge; age, see the almanack. He talks incessantly, and in high enjoyment, and now a hit, and now a miss in the way of a joke.

The *brothers* here are purely carnivorous—nothing but steaks hot and hot. It is a curious scene to see princes in this convivial way.

By-the-bye, Mayo absolutely believes the Duke

of Sussex stole his gloves whilst he pretended in condescension to lift his hat from the ground!

I have got the worst fag of my course over. I want just two guineas of my 1000*l.*

C. B.

31st March, 1810.

My dear George,

The College of Surgeons have begun their lectures on the Establishment of the Hunterian Museum and a grant of Parliament. The lectures are given at our hours. All lecturers but I are invited; this has given me considerable uneasiness, and what to do I am still at a loss. They have at the same time made a petition to Parliament for more money. I wish Brougham to take some notice of it in the House. All else goes well. . . . .

I have just returned from an ineffectual attempt to get into the House of Commons. Windham was speaking, one of the reporters told me through the gallery door, but none of them would take a word of it. I dined with Abernethy to-day. I think ministers will carry the Walcheren business; carry it, but not free themselves.

16th April, 1810.

Dear George,

To-night, as you may imagine, the town is in combustion; the mob is out, and the Guards are out, and the candles are in the windows, or the glass is out of them. "Hurra! Burdett for ever!"

In Piccadilly the people are all-powerful. Burdett is not yet gone to the Tower. It appears to me that ministers are rousing this feeling on the old system of directing the attention of men from themselves, and to raise in their favour the friends of good order. There is so much trick about this demagogue, so much knowledge of the town, such a want of the simplicity and dignity of a man of talent and principle, that I have no respect for him. This will make him perfectly happy.

I have written you a letter since this. I do not know how I forgot it. All is quiet here as if it had never been. The mob was no mob; nothing but a little fun, though the ministry thought fit to draw the troops from 100 miles round, and make London look like a besieged town.

You will be angry when I tell you I was in the middle of it. In coming home from Brompton on Saturday night the tide in Piccadilly was at the height. A charge of horse was made which forced me up Dover Street. I went round by Albemarle Street and Bond Street, which were all gaily illuminated; and a fine bustle of people, and soldiers, and troops of horse. I came down through the Albany, and called on Mayo. Canning lives here, and the porters are on the alert. When they opened the door to let me into Piccadilly, the noise and confusion were immense. Here also was a charge of horse, and the people driven into the court—a stupid movement.

Motionless I stood on the threshold, when the porter gave me a push behind and locked the door. I found myself in the midst of things! I heard several reports of pistols, and in the avenue opposite, by the side of St. James's Church, a lad was shot through the chest—for, on conversing with him at the hospital, I found it was at that time he was wounded.

The commotion on Sunday night reached our length, for a charge of horse forced the people out of Coventry Street into the square. The shouting, the clashing of swords, and the breaking of the lamps, were, I understand, terrific. In a moment all was darkness, for, instead of calling for lights, they broke all the lamps and windows where there were candles. I came home soon after, wondering at the unusual darkness. I had *wisely* given orders to my garrison that if there were any noise or illumination they should not move or show any token of life within, but let the windows be broken in peace.

C. B.

25th May, 1810.

DEAR GEORGE,

I was at the play last night. Mrs. Siddons in "Constance." I go on taking her commentaries on Shakspeare and the passions. Indeed, I turn me more and more again to the anatomy of expression, and the more, that I have had lately the most severe disappointments in my experiments on the nerves. Confident that I was to make a

system captivating as the circulation, and possessed powerfully by this idea of a decided superiority at one brave bound—you may imagine my disappointment.

I weary to see you, and weary for the country. Eternal din! Oh, for that silence in which I could distinctly hear myself speak. Solitary confinement is preferable to this unceasing motion. Now, too, the foliage is cool and dark, the light breaks through the trees with silver splendour, and the distance is bright and enticing. Of this the Park informs me. I shall go to Lynn's cottage, but there everything is such studied negligence, such flower-pot gardening, it cramps and confines one's every thought.

9th June, 1810.

You will see by the newspaper that they have succeeded in killing Windham. It is a pity to lose such a man at any time. They ought not to have operated, and so I told Lynn, but I did not think it would be so quickly fatal as this. It was a tumour, deep upon the hip-joint, and the constitution being bad, the powers of life were too feeble. . . . . I see few people but my patients. I continue to paint, and my Brain will hold together still!

This morning, by six o'clock, I had the figure with me to paint from. My little collection begins now to look well, and, as you may conceive, peculiar, having the paintings placed in the interstices of the preparations. I have made ten little

pictures. I shall not forget to write to you of the paintings I occasionally see, but at this moment my mind is all agog about my nervous system. It occupies me chiefly, yet it is only in sitting ruminating, not in work.

I have received a handsome eyeglass from Mr. Winn. By the bye, do you remember laughing me out of a fancy I had of making improved spectacles, viz., making them convex, like a watch glass, but so much more concave on the inside as to adapt them to the near-sighted eye? Such a thing has been invented and extolled by Dollond, or some great optician; I heard it talked of in company. If I had said that I had thought of *that*, would I have been believed? The effect is to give you the whole field of vision, so that *you* might squint and ogle with the best of us*.

20th June.

Johnnie having got a frank from F. Horner, to his mother, I put five lines in to Marion, requesting to be invited down when Barbara and the children are there. . . . . I think by the middle of August I shall be again amongst my dear friends, and return to God and nature once more.

C. B.

* George Bell then wore short-sighted spectacles, which Charles did not till some years later.

FROM C. BELL TO MISS SHAW.*

1810.

* * * * *

. . . . In the early stages of society (why, this is a history!)—Well, my love, you would not have me go to the glass and tell you I was handsome.—In the early stages of society I would have tried to be a hero for your sake—but now there are none. It is easy for a man of spirit to do what is called a dashing thing; for a desperate man to throw his life away; and many and many a time in the prosecution of my plans of life have I wished that I were with the armies, to rid myself of the load of life without discredit. This was not from melancholy or love, but the consciousness of not filling the situation I was entitled to—and thus I answer one of your questions—"Is he proud?" You must consider my situation. I came to London to strive with the first men, as I thought them, and my *pride* made me go straight forward, by dint of application and talents. I had only one friend in the world. I had lived as a retired student, also, I confess it, from *pride*, and here in London I was not known. I had neither house nor money, nor recommendation. I expected to receive a hundred guineas, but met on my very first entrance into London, an absolute refusal; "it had been a mistake, and the arrangement not completed," so they said. I

* After a short visit to Scotland, Charles corresponded more with his future wife than with his brother.

can still recollect the effect of the London cries dinning in my ears, that I had no longer a home. I can recollect the very odd sensation in passing through the crowded streets alone among thousands—the bustle of a coffee-house dinner when I took my solitary meal. I had leisure for contemplation. I had time to riot in the misery of visiting the Abbey and St. Paul's, and the parks and gardens. Then it was that a brother's love was the spring of life—my warm feelings towards him corrected my cold distrust of the world.

Then it appears I was not a *prudent* man to leave Edinburgh, and I was *rash* to come to London; and I was *sad* for many a day, but still I was neither languid nor depressed, but rather very enthusiastic. . . . . My faculties were not stagnant. I am sure that in the interval of a year, without a very determined object, my mind ripened to manhood. I do not know well how otherways to express the change which took place. It was necessary to the struggle I now entered upon. My dear M., my difficulties were great. I may say to you, who love me independent of all this, that I think I was at this time rather an interesting person, if all could have been known, and I look back with pleasure in recollecting that I carried my head proudly in circumstances particularly depressing. I reflect with pleasure, too, that without the aid of circumstances I was everywhere received as a gentleman and a man of merit. I am sure that at this

moment I am more capable of valuing, and of course of loving, my excellent Marion than if I had not known what it was to be cut off from friendly fellowship, and left to depend upon myself. Then I learned that affection is alone valuable. . . .

2nd November, 1810.

* * * * * *

I have sent for your good book. I comprehend the feeling. I have felt it since I parted from you—now it rivets my heart to you.

I see a God in everything, my love; it is the habit of my mind. Do you think I could have been employed as I have been without contemplating the architect? There I *am* an enthusiast. There I can rest in happy confidence until I turn my eye on the busy, bustling, selfish world again. . . . .

Another thing pleased me, your recommending a book full of the mild doctrines of the better sort of the Church of England. These views are to me the ideas of infancy. Such was the idea of Christ inculcated by my dear mother, and such as she undoubtedly received from my father.

I don't remember my father; I often think (and more of late) of my mother. You cannot think with what a pang I felt her death, and with it the thousand occasions lost of showing my filial love and respect. George and I were my mother's favourites; George she loved and respected most, but when she could not speak to him, she would seek consolation with me. In her last illness—

which at that time I did not think dangerous—she would rise in the night and come to me; an anxiety came sometimes upon her, a sense as of dissolution, when she could only sleep in peace while I held her hand and was beside her. . . . Still I can recollect the break of day, the hollow gusts of wind while watching. . . . . I know not how it is, by what strange *undiscovered* resemblance that often both George and I have thought of my mother while looking at you—in the voice there is certainly a strong resemblance. . . . .

FROM CHARLES BELL TO HIS BROTHER GEORGE.

11th December, 1810.

My dear George,

I sent you my Essay yesterday by frank, from the Secretary of State's office; tell me what you think of it—correct freely, but see that you do not change the sense. What I meant by *quære*, was that you had, in making good English, made bad surgery. I enclosed such drawings only as might show you what I meant, not what I was to deliver to the Society. I should like to send my *Brain!* to the Edinburgh Society; it shall be my most pleasant work. . . . . Will you have it transcribed for me, and send it up?

13th December.

I see a large house in Jermyn Street, a small one in Cork Street; these are the streets I thought of after Leicester Fields. The difficulty is the

class-room, and until I can ascertain that point I am checkmated, not mated. House-pupils I must have, or give up the whole concern of teaching and the character of an anatomist, and I think I would die of the yellow jaundice, though I had angels and cherubims beside me. What do you say?

How Time flings us from him, and his determined stride forbids the hope of seeing his front again. Well! let the churl go scowling, as to-day in fog, or let him pass in smiling sunshine, jocund or gay, our good spirits are our own, and if we cannot hold them singly, yet together we may. It will go hard, if by alternate strokes we cannot keep up the ball. . . . .

The class is not so productive, and will not be, while forty thousand of our men are in Portugal. . . . . On the whole, my practice is establishing itself. On March last I had 1000*l.*, this year I hope to run near the 1500*l.*

You have now much to write to me about, and I hope you will find time.

C. B.

CHAPTER IX.

Preparations for His Marriage—House-Pupils—Marriage Tour—New Life.

1811.

FROM C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

February, 1811.

My dear George,

Don't think I sit down to write with irritation. You have only our good at heart—I know it and feel it,* but my house-pupils have been my means of connection with students at large. Strong combinations are forming everywhere. Hitherto my reception among all my pupils is most gratifying, and this I attribute to the influence of house-pupils, as I never experienced it before I had them. They saved me from desperation. Even this winter their merry voices and friendly countenances have been my greatest comfort. I have already said how I intend to have them—how to conduct myself towards them. Marion, perhaps, showed you that part of my letter to her? . . . . You do not suppose me such an insensible dolt as that all these reasons and views in your letter should not touch me? But

* It had been suggested that Charles should relinquish his house-pupils on his marriage.

I say this to myself. I do not deserve happiness if, by these suggestions, I am to be turned from my *plan of life*. I know that there is an ambition in my nature which cannot give up professional and scientific eminence—even to the attachment of a wife; and if by yielding now I lay a foundation for vain regrets, where is domestic peace? Now, my dear, dear George, you know how I love her—you know that you are as my sole friend. Lay this matter before her family; take it into your own consideration. . . . . Be assured of this, that love of you and Marion is at the bottom of all my "irritation." You must consider that these young men are *house-pupils*, not *boarders*. Dr. Denman, Dr. Baillie, Mr. Hunter, Abernethy, Cooper, Wilson, have had them, or have them. Their necessity is understood; they are admitted to be essential to a lecturer. It is no trick—no novelty.

There sit my boys at their books, poor fellows, quiet, and full of more respectful feelings than I have elsewhere excited. John Cheyne is quite against the arguments you have stated. It has ever been the admiration of Richardson—their respectful silence in my presence.

Now, my dear George, because I have leant too much upon you, and indulged a little, as a fretful child, in complaining to those who are most kind and indulgent, yet do not conceive me unmanly enough to carry my bad humour to Marion. Of my dear, indulgent sister, I have ever entertained

thoughts of kindness. You know it is our nature sometimes to avoid speaking of the affections we tenderly feel, but of Barbara my estimation is so high, that I have no desire but that Marion may be like her as a wife and dear companion.

* * * * *

I like to look forward to being with you and Barbara, and, if you will, solemnly fixing to live near each other *hereafter*. If I have no family, a very few thousand pounds will satisfy me, and we shall come and live with you. Perhaps by that time they may be willing to have my name in the College of Edinburgh! There is a day dream!

Adieu. I am at dinner. All well and happy—*sometimes* extravagantly happy.

C. B.

FROM G. J. BELL TO CHARLES BELL.

20th February, 1811.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

* * * * *

I have a letter from Mrs. Shaw yesterday expressing her perfect reliance on whatever arrangement you may make as best and most proper, and that her only consolation for "all the torment you have met with is that you have been thus enabled to give additional proof of your steady adherence to the dictates of your own good sense and experience in opposition to the arguments of your most beloved friends."

Thus, my dear Charles, do I dismiss this subject, confirming what I said in my last letter of my conviction that you are right and I wrong. So I hope to hear that your offer * has been accepted, and also that you are taking care to give such notice to your present landlord as to free you from all claim of his.

G. J. B.

29th March, 1811.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Do you ever draw now? We must have our sketch-books out again. How much the modesty of your nature has kept you back in many things. But it is of little consequence, and perhaps better that one's exertions should be undeviating to one object. Life is short—not long enough to do good, even by example; so that he who follows is little better than a dog—he must be whipt by fortune, and get wise by his own experience, not our precepts.

I begin to be very restless after dinner. The fine afternoon sun carries me far into the west. John is just now asking me when the painter is to begin my portrait. This puts me in mind of your promise to Marion, so I tell you that the walls of our dining-room are ready now, and in a month I expect to see your two effigies decorating them, so that when she comes she may receive your welcome even here.

* For 34, Soho Square.

I am to send you my portrait by Haydon,* and Marion's, if I can get a good painter. I had a petition to have my face stuck up in the Exhibition, but that was too much. Besides, some one might have fallen in love with it, and been miserable for life!

SOHO SQUARE, *May*, 1811.
Saturday.

I like the house I am in more and more. The *walk* in the drawing-room looking down on the green and trees of the square very pleasant. I have been buying several things, and have got "the hawk and bells" engraved on them. I shall not buy a dessert set of china or tea-things till the lady comes. They will give an interest to our forenoon rambles. I am sitting in the dining-room. I wish I could place you in that corner, I would make you confess that I have managed very well. I can call on Marion to join me here with great confidence. Write about my meeting you.

You speak of *sending, one of these days,* some papers for my approbation. You must needs be active then. My paper was read before the Royal Society, and the précis of it was read last Thursday night. I did not know of this, nor would I have been present if I had. I hear nothing of it further than that Wollaston drew the abstract of it with great care.

C. B.

* This portrait was never painted.

34, Soho Square,
17*th June*, 1811.

My dear George,

We arrived here last night to a late dinner.* . . . . . All around me looks cheerful and happy, and I have nothing to do but fulfil my serious intentions of labouring diligently and entering on a plan of strict economy to ensure as much felicity as falls to our lot. . . . . Don't misunderstand the humour in which I am writing. I wish to show you the serious thoughts I have in the midst of my success. There is a calm delight better than joy. My Marion is like one who had every wish realised and fair prospects afar off, animated and happy. . . . .

We went to the Lakes. Nothing could be finer than the morning ride along Ulleswater. The coolness of the glassy lake, the freshness of the banks, the richness of the natural wood thro' which the road winds—throwing off the landscape to a distance, and giving the remote parts clearness and brilliancy. I took a sketch from the ruin at Patterdale looking down upon the lake. The stage after breakfast is over the mountains, and we came down on Ambleside, *where we have been together.* From Ambleside to Bowness all at rest, all gay, and Nature in her very richest ornaments. From Bowness we went upon the lake, and the heart and eyes of my dear Marion

* On the 3rd of June, 1811, Charles Bell married Marion, second daughter of Charles Shaw, Esq., Ayr.

partook of the delightful scene around us. I must copy my sketches for you.

We visited Warwick Castle—beyond description fine—made still more striking by the air of decayed magnificence. In my life I never saw anything to fill the mind so entirely—a scene to dream of. We saw it in the decline of day, and so unexpected was the pleasure, that it was presented to us as if a curtain were withdrawn to show the perfection of art in the full display of all that was delightful in nature. We visited Blenheim, which came poorly off after Warwick Castle. Marion said "it was artificial," which, tho' like nonsense, is the very feeling, for everything seems made for some little purpose. It served to prepare us for the City of Palaces, Oxford. Here is England in her most august and venerable aspect. I wish I could have carried you into the Chapel of New College, the dim religious light—the fine painted windows throwing a strange lurid colour on the maze of rich ornaments indistinctly seen. We strayed into another chapel, lighted for service—matter for volumes of romance—a new *organ of the brain* put into motion, the expectation gratified, the senses and the sentiment, the heart *filled.*

Monday.

I have your letter, my dear George. We have been a little fatigued this morning with *people,* teazed with people with whom, if they had not

come, I should have been angry; so it is pleasant to be plagued. Two new patients this morning.

C. B.

No date, about July, 1811.

I have just finished my dissertation on Gunshot Wounds, and I am going to entreat you to look it over, but I shall first *read* it myself. I shall now have, as pastime, to make out some explanations of the plates. After that, I shall take my other subject, meaning to make a splendid edition of plates—a fasciculus of the morbid anatomy of the parts; saying, that I may probably prosecute the subject by giving the morbid structure of other organs.

But my serious study will be the small ornate account of the Anatomy of the Brain. On this I shall swell myself into importance, and make myself very happy. . . . .

Do try to make out your promised visit to us; it will be a great delight to us all, I am sure. Write about it, for that, also, is delightful. Write, notwithstanding I don't deserve it, for it is my greatest happiness to see your letters. You need not write to Marion as if I must see it; for I wish to see nothing, or let aught be seen.

Believe me to be ever your affectionate brother; and I rest upon you now as ever I did.

C. B.

G. J. BELL TO C. BELL.

EDINBURGH, 13*th July*, 1811.

Thank you, dear Charles, for your letter, and thank Marion also, in my name, for her appendix, tho' short. It gives me the first notion of your way of living I have distinctly had since you went away.

I had a long solitary walk last night, just at that hour of evening stillness when the breeze of the west lifts the leaves gently and lets them fall with the very voice of repose. I leant long against the gate into a hay-field, delighted. I thought of you all with great satisfaction, and a kind of sober ecstasy, at thinking that in less than a fortnight I should see all that are dear to me in life—Barbara, the dear weans, our friends at Ayr, and though last in the progress, not less in my little vision of happiness, Marion and you, in your own house, living affectionately in that state which is happiest under Heaven.

CHARLES BELL TO G. J. BELL.

31*st August*, 1811.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

So you are by this time seated in Heriot Row, in the house that of all others I love the most, and was happiest in, when you and Barbara, my poor aunt, and my own Marion, floated before my eyes. I was wont to sit and think it a dream.

I think, my dear George, all my objects

hitherto have been attained. I was too early brought forward as a teacher, and too much left to my own weak efforts, not to feel acutely what I went through on leaving Edinburgh. The length of time which I saw must pass before I could possibly accomplish what I was resolved upon—a proud station in the profession,—threw me off, as it were, a great distance from society; and I can well remember when the attentions I met with were more painful than pleasing. I then foresaw I was a long time to be forgotten, until I should force myself upon the attentions of the same people with better feelings of desert. My ambition of being consistent and persevering is almost gratified. If I ever arrive at the head of my profession, the profession shall not be the worse of it. I shall try to add a lustre of goodness, of gentlemanlike tastes and pursuits to the situation, and so grace the professional character. Yes! my dear George, there remains much to do, yet who so imperfect in many respects as I am!

Besides, I am hemmed in strangely. I am very desirous to have my class-rooms removed from this place, and to found a *school*. If I am baulked here, I have no object remaining but the advancement of John Shaw. I shall continue to give lectures until my patients increase sufficiently (to) give it up, only retaining my lecture-room to give lectures on some chosen subjects occasionally.

My object and my whole efforts shall then be to study for some philosophical papers, and to

make up the work on Expression to something national and great,—attending to my museum more than hitherto. How do you like me? Is this brotherly and free, or irrational and vain?

29th September, 1811.

MY DEAR DO-DO,*

In regard to patients, there has been an awful pause. My number of house-pupils is filled up, and I have made a great ado about their characters, and have had most ample testimonials. My class-pupils are in the womb of Time.

My "idea of the Brain" seems to be very well taken by all with whom I have conversed. Has any body read it with you?

I admire, and yet I don't like, the Edinburgh Review. It is like being forced to walk when you are languid and wish to be at peace. (I speak it feelingly.) It is like a loud, rattling fellow breaking in on your quiet. You hear him long before you understand him, and say—"Heavens! what is all this about?" I most admire their pertinacity. If this were not constitutional, and if Jeffrey could not speak to a weak old woman with equal animation, I would say that this power of spurring himself periodically was highly meritorious.

Ever yours, my dear George,

C. B.

* This was a pet name for George, as "May," instead of Marion, was for his wife.

About 30th September, 1811.

* * * * *

Our house-pupils are of the best species, and are a great comfort to me.

I have got a great pagan to deal with in my old Leicester Square landlord. The workmen I have sent to deal with him turn up their eyes at the iniquity of the villain. It is a curious and a new thing to see rage united with deep trick—self-interest working a little wretch to venom.

I am sitting at coffee with Marion, just about my time to go to lecture. . . . . I watch her ever, and the animated colour in her cheek (which is not constant) is sunshine to me. I think she is quite well,—sometimes I fancy her pale,—but when she next appears Nature has dipped her brush in her finest tint, and thrown it in lovely tint on her cheek and skin! There, will that do? I know she is looking over my shoulder!

* * * * *

Barbara, I imagine, is now with you, and you make each other as happy as you both deserve to be. Heaven protect you, and give good luck to the insurers! John Murray * has been here, and has been laughing at you and your *sketch*, and praising you above all men. . . . .

Has nobody seen my Brain? If I am not flattered, it takes here.

I have come from lecture, and all goes very

* Afterwards Lord Murray.

well; hitherto it could not be better—much still in the dark. I am quite well. Why, man, the stir is my safety—indolence and indulgence my bane; but I fear I am still dreaming I am at lecture. I shall have sad plagues with my old landlord. I shall endeavour to be cool and wise. He turns one side to me with a kind of movement of his shoulders, and bawls out—DILAPIDATIONS!

Wednesday.

I am now lecturing on the nerves, and I see in this subject a great field for a man of genius and industry.

Yours, C. B.

CHAPTER X.

Great Windmill Street School—Difficulties in conveying the Property—Brougham and Lord Castlereagh—Museum and Lectures—Burning of Moscow—Hunt's Trial—The Authors of "Rejected Addresses."

1812.

EARLY in 1812 Mr. Wilson, the proprietor of the school of Great Windmill Street—formerly so famous as connected with William and John Hunter, Hewson, Dr. Baillie, Everard Home, &c.—offered to sell the whole establishment to Charles Bell for 10,000*l.* The impossibility of commanding such a sum alone prevented him from closing with the offer; and when, on the 12th of March, a modification of the proposal was made, it was ultimately accepted.

George, though fully sympathising with his brother's anxiety to carry on the school of the Hunters and restore its position in the medical world, had some doubts as to the worldly wisdom of the terms on which he concluded the arrangements with Mr. Wilson, and the early correspondence of the year turns on these business matters. Unfortunately, George's fears were so far justified, that on Mr. Wilson's sudden death,

a few years afterwards, the pecuniary affairs were complicated. But as a "school," the success was complete.

FROM C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

27th March, 1812.

My dear George,

I don't doubt that you are at present anxious to hear from me. I remain confident that this is a decided step in advance.

I am the only lecturer from Scotland. I have gained a high situation in the medical world by my industry; and my character is equal to the situation. I am supporting the school of Edinburgh, and the character of my countrymen as medical men, and the character of the University which produced me. As soon, therefore, as the transaction is completed, I intend to show the nature and pretensions of the school, speaking, —not for my own interest, for while I struggled as an individual I asked no assistance, but now I do—for the support of an old and most respectable institution, one which, founded by the Hunters, has made all the anatomists of the present day, at home and abroad.

13th April.

My dear George,

I have been in the City—tired with walking, and so, near home, I have stopped at the Hummums Coffee-house to get a good cup of coffee, and while indulging in it I write to you.

Yesterday I called on Everard Home; he had sent his assistant to say he would be happy to be introduced to me. I said that I would take an early opportunity of calling on him. His conversation was of Dr. Hunter, &c. He said they were all of that school, and were bound to support it. He broke the matter by saying that what was so much for the advantage of science would meet with his hearty approbation.* I do not know what he meant by this, were it not my joining the school. I think I can see that they are convinced that I unite the means of supporting it with a respectability that is creditable to them. Everybody who knows London, Windmill Street, or me, considers this as a great step, and the approbation of those to whom I have as yet communicated it is hearty and consoling.

Friday.

I shall be done with my present lectures by the last day of this month. This summer promises to be the happiest of my life from the labour I shall be engaged in, and the field that is before me.† I shall take some departments and

* Sir E. Home was at this time President of the College of Surgeons. He had formerly lectured in Great Windmill Street with Dr. Baillie.

† George Bell, in a letter to his wife about this period, writes—"Charles did not sleep all last night," says Marion; "he wakened me with 'O May! it will be a noble museum,' and, to be sure, when in addition to Wilson's, which, he says, is very good, he puts his own, his models, drawings, &c., there will be nothing to equal it. If Heaven give but this dear brother and me health and strength, and resolution for a few years, we shall be respected in ourselves, and rich and useful to all connected with us."

study them intently. I shall be engaged in making preparations and drawings, and in teaching myself to read and speak. Sometimes I am astonished with myself, sometimes mortified with my manner of lecturing.

13th May.

We have just heard of the fate of Percival, with every aggravated feeling of horror. I have yet seen nobody. The streets are in confusion.

3rd May, 1812.

My dear George,

You may believe that, with such objects before me, I am tolerably busy. I am experiencing what I expected—the happiness of this life of exertion, modelling, writing, and putting this *great museum* in order. All my preparations are now in Windmill Street. It will indeed be a noble place—well filled, as far as meets the eye, and very rich. My happiness in all this is at present unalloyed. I am grateful to Providence. When we are a little further advanced, I shall write a description of the museum to you.

Brougham, as you see, goes in his own way in his strength, making himself popular and rich by his profession. I cannot help admiring this. It is cold, but there is something great in it. He is much blamed at Holland House, I suppose, for going to Lord Castlereagh, and telling him that he came to him in a sense of moral duty—that he hoped he would remain in

office because it would be giving encouragement to assassination to let it be told that the death of one man could at any time change the face of affairs.

1st June.

I am busy, and we are happy—that I know you like to hear. It would delight you to see me the proprietor of this museum, which looks great, even now in its great confusion—a noble room nobly filled. It is a room admired for its proportions, of great size, with a handsome gallery running round; the class-room door opens from the gallery. It would require a month to go round the museum with a book in your hand. I knew that this was a thing to me above all value, and already, by good arrangement, and by the addition of my own preparations, I have filled the room. I am in the museum every morning betwixt six and seven *doing up* my models to the light, which now falls perpendicularly on them.

C .B.

20th July, 1812.

My dear George,

I have begun my studies at Lord Elgin's. You laugh at me calling my idleness study, so we gloss over the matter with ourselves. But really I make a study of it, and I would not consider it as idleness if it were not that I have a suspicious palpitation from delight in beholding these remains of Greek sculpture.

Yesterday I had Everard Home with me in Windmill Street, and he commended many things. The conservator of the Hunterian Museum (Mr. Cliff) was with him, who was much pleased. Home asked me to give any duplicates of fine preparations to the College. He said that what was desirable, and not demanded by the College from St. George's Hospital, I should have. So I say again, it is a curious change. Who would not have said six months ago that I was the last man in London to be so considered?

C. B.

25th August, 1812.

My dear George,

Did I tell you that I have got the heads of Dr. Hunter, Vesalius, and Cheseldean to ornament the gallery of the museum. I was sitting there drawing yesterday when first Brande, then Dr. Cook, then Wilson, Brodie, and Roget came in upon me, to lay our heads together about advertisements and hours of attendance. Wilson you know about, as connected with the school of Great Windmill Street; Dr. Cook is an elderly man, tall, wears spectacles, a scholar, and in good society; Brande is a very young man—he succeeds Davy in the Royal Institution, has made discoveries, written good papers in the Society Transactions, and is a favourite with Sir Joseph Banks, Dr. Baillie, &c.; Dr. Roget who takes part of Dr. Cook's lectures is, you know, the nephew

of Sir Samuel Romilly, a well-informed, active young man, and I have no doubt by his own industry and his friends, will do remarkably well. Benjamin Brodie is an assistant-surgeon of St. George's Hospital, Home's assistant, and in good estimation as a young man. You were wont to say my liberality and good nature would be of much advantage to me if I could be known. Now you find me united with a great body of men and beginning that connection with the character of sparing neither labour, nor time, nor expense for the advancement of the profession. Indeed I feel every day the advance I have made. In looking back to the solitary nature of my state hitherto, I am, I may say without affectation, astonished that I have surmounted the difficulties and uncomfortableness that I have done.

Yours,

C. BELL.

2nd October, 1812.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I sit down to tell you how we are going on in Windmill Street. From twelve till the hour of Wilson's lecture, incessant thunder, lightning, and rain! But, notwithstanding, our museum was crowded with respectable students, and the class-room well filled. John says 120; I say 80. Wilson was vastly pleased—often turned round to whisper to me that we should have an excellent

class. A great many entered, and the lecture was delivered by him in good style.

7th.

I gave my first lecture yesterday, and the walk I took after it was perhaps the most gratifying of my life. I shall some day send you down my introduction; the subject of the lecture was the structure of the bone. I gave an hour and a half to a full class, and I think the effect was good, and I hope decisive. There were from 80 to 100 there, not gathered for the occasion, but the pupils of the class. I was entirely among strangers—not one friend, except to my astonishment, Johnnie Richardson. I have yielded so much, been so quiet, and harangued so little, that I saw plainly the effect of the lecture was as much surprise as pleasure in the congratulations of Wilson, and that not one of my new acquaintance understood their man until I had concluded my lecture.

You see me then, my dear George, at the height of my ambition in regard to teaching; and the natural consequence, I suppose, is the decline of that exertion which brought me to this. I am, indeed, very idle.

9th December.

Not think of the news? To be sure I do. We shall see the armies of France recalled from Spain. This is a great stroke, and nobody to thank at home. The Russians have done it as a people, and all our gay soldiers and bad ministers have

nothing to crow about. The country, therefore, will be left to its own good sense, to control the operations of a stupid ministry, and a licentious court! There is my view of politics. . . . .

31*st.*

Brougham is truly a great fellow, and while he retains his senses, bears no comparison with any other man. In the trial of Hunt, he carried himself with composure and dignity; the ingenuity of the argument we may see by the report, but there was also, I am told, great eloquence. The interruption of his lordship was frivolous, but necessary at the same time, for Brougham was carrying the hearts of the jury—*the jury were forgetting themselves!* Lord Ellenborough in the meanwhile was chafing in rage, restless, bursting with bad humour. The barristers who have been so often oppressed by him forgot their jealousy of Brougham, in the pleasure of seeing one who would not be repressed. This I had from C——, who was present. Other aristocratic men, as my friend W——, &c., thought him lost, and that Lord Ellenborough had *settled* him for ever.

The authors of the Rejected Addresses are two brothers of the name of Smith. Horace Twiss undertook to bring these new lions to a party of Lady Cork's, where he was to dine. They had the good sense to despise this sort of thing, and the wit to write thus:—"Dear Twiss, I am sorry

that we cannot have the pleasure of accepting Lady Cork's invitation, as my brother is to swallow fire at Bartholomew Fair, and I am to roar at Bow." I wish some of our Scottish lions had spirit for this.

Yours, C. B.

CHAPTER XI.

The College of Surgeons—Question put to him—Sir J. Reynolds's Portraits—His Ugolino—Vegetable Physiology—John Hunter's Portrait—Lectures on the "Brain"—Making acquaintance with his Curricle.

1813.

3rd June.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Here has been Sir Charles Blicke proposing that I should enter the College.* This you wish, and this I think quite right.

* * * * *

The College received me with all possible respect. The question asked me—facetious dogs—was, of what disease I thought Buonaparte would die? And so I was admitted. Next day I met Sir Everard Home in consultation, and from him I found that this calling on me was a matter arranged at the Board, and then he told me how Mr. Hunter had been questioned, and how he had been admitted.

In these whirligig expeditions my pencil and sketch book are never from my side.† They lie

* Charles Bell was not then a Member of the College of Surgeons of London.

† He had bought a phaeton in order to give his wife, then in delicate health, as much fresh air as possible.

behind me in the carriage, and have filled a book. Shall I send it to you? or one I intend to do much better?

C. B.

12th August, 1813.

My dear George,

I received yours this morning. I am somewhat disappointed in the impression my note of lectures has made upon you, but that will only spur me on to express better what is in my mind. How could you think, my dear fellow, of making me criticize Sir Joshua's pictures. First, let me tell you that they are beautiful—some of his male portraits admirable; for instance, that of Count —— and John Hunter; his portraits of women and children especially, truly beautiful—the expression of the children sweet as can be imagined. But his historical pieces, or rather his poetical compositions, and that of Count Ugolino—tho' it has been praised, and is now praised by the newspaper—will never be spoken of again. You may recollect a man whom the boys called Cat's-face and Dog's-nose?—such a squalid, starved creature Sir Joshua drew as a study, and being well done, some friends recommended him to compose it into the story of Count Ugolino, and such an account does the picture countenance—it is exceedingly bad. He ought to have been a starved *Count*, large in bones, rugged, manly, wild, desperate, not a lean, pitiful, mean old man, with a

nasty bush of grey hair sticking out from hi head; and the boys are equally poor, having lon suffered from bad diet, fruit, and worms. Ther is nothing for me to criticize in his paintings; h never ventures on anatomy, never shows his out line, but dexterously conceals it; his conceptio and execution of great subjects very, very bad.

I am reading, by way of pastime, all that I ca procure on fossil remains. This is a subject whic has become *anatomical* by the exertions of Cuvie of Paris. It is a very curious one.

3rd September.

I am at present in a delightful maze of stud of pleasing subjects. I have, of necessity, take up the Anatomy of Vegetables; it is very delight ful. I wish another link to connect me with th country. I begin another sheet, intending it t lie by me, for Marion went this morning to sta two days with Mrs. Hankey. . . . . I go your letter this morning, much in the old way while sitting at my solitary breakfast. I lik much the liberal spirit which you show in givin so much credit to your friends. I feel that mysel I think I envy no man.

6th October, 1813.

I have got a beautiful copy of Sir Joshu Reynolds' finest portrait—John Hunter, namely It is admitted to be nearly as fine as the admire original.* There is a man, Jackson, who has

* This only complete copy of John Hunter's portrait is now in the National Portrait Gallery.

wond[illegible]alent for copying the old masters. He charges more for a copy than Raeburn does for painting a portrait. I mean to keep your portrait—it is a great comfort to me.

Yours, C. B.

10th November, 1813.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I gave a lecture to-day to a large class upon the "Brain." Yesterday I gave one on the same subject, *the Brain*, of an hour and three-quarters, with only a green cloth before me. This will give you an idea of my improvement in talking. Richardson has borrowed my horse to ride with Cockburn. I was at the play to-night. "May" gave me oysters and porter on coming home. I never eat oysters without recollecting the first I got from you at Newhaven.

23rd.

This has lain too long—written five days ago. The curricle does to admiration, yet that is not just the word either—the old machine was more admired. If a citizen and his wife met us, she jogged him and scolded him for not having so nice and genteel a chay. If a warm, careful man passed, he was sure to stop, and looking round, bethink himself that he might have just such a snug, comfortable vehicle. If a fat, overgrown, gouty gentleman, filling his own one-horse chair, descried us, he blamed himself for not thinking of a thing so safe instead of trusting his precious body in a break-neck gig; and even gentlemen

who valued their wives would stop and say it was good, and *sans pretension.* So farewell to the Phae.! The first day I mounted my curricle, I drove into the City. The horses, the carriage, and I, had met for the first time that day. I was resolved to make acquaintance with my cattle, and tho' a rainy, splashy day, I drove into the midst of them. I went into a square where I thought no one would recognise me, and drove like the d—— round and round. I brought myself back, knowing by experience that I could drive two as easily as one—that they were tame, and that I had perfect management of them. To-day I took out Marion for the first time, and drove her nearly twenty miles. I am perfectly convinced she would fall ill as ever without this.

I found my equipage a great comfort when in consultation in Portland Place twice a day.

Yours, C. B.

CHAPTER XII.

French Politics—Middlesex Hospital Election—Poverty—Baron Driesen—Emperors and Kings in London—Delight in Teaching—Cassiobury Park—The Prince's Bad Humour—The Opera—Mons. Roux's Visit—Baron Driesen's Gift—Waverley—The Hospital—Sir J. McGregor, &c., at Lecture—Fresh Experiments on the Nerves—Anxieties about the Property in Windmill Street.

1814.

20th January, 1814.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have been writing and delivering lectures in quick succession of late. I finished the first course with some *éclat*, and gave a good lecture (introductory), well composed and much studied, to a tolerable class yesterday. But such a day! One's best friends might well affirm they were driven back in the attempt to come to me.

Your snow-storm must be very bad. Here it is as dreadful as I have ever seen it in Edinburgh, and more wonderful. Hackney coaches with four horses, bands of frozen-out gardeners howling, streets overflown because there is no water but from spigots in the pipes. The change of climate makes the people wear new faces, and the cold makes your friends so bundle the clothes upon them, that you mistake their figures also. What's

the use of writing? You will not receive this; there are no arrivals by mail, and cannot be.

It is very difficult to make up one's mind about politics. That Buonaparte is a wretch, a fiend with great animal activity, is quite evident. But what interest can anyone have in those despicable Bourbons? Is it not a bad prospect to begin a war on their account? And is it not bad enough to contemplate a great people governed by such an incorrigible set of miscreants—probably without any provision for a government, but such as the old constitution of France? In truth I have lost the high interest I had in the contest, because I do not know what to wish for. But, peace—this is certainly a substantial good.

Saturday.

I have just had an old pupil at tea who has been seven years in France, and as he has travelled through a great part of the country, and last from Paris, I cannot help believing him. He says Buonaparte is universally detested, and those on whom he has heaped riches are ashamed to speak in his favour. Three years ago they considered him as a god, and never spoke of him but as his Imperial Majesty; now he is again—*Buonaparte.* He was in Paris when the legislative senate stubbornly resisted Buonaparte's will. A Monsieur de St. Jean d'Angely stood up in the senate, and in bold speech complained loudly of the Government's publishing a garbled account of his speech, and calling on the body to order the

whole to be printed. The dispute was warm, and much indignation and very free discussion of the Emperor's measures was entertained. Next day, on going to the room of Assembly, they found the door shut against them, and an order issued for their dissolution. It is the custom in France, on New Year's Day, for all inferiors to pay their compliments to their superiors, and of the public functionaries to wait upon the Emperor. He abused the most respectable of the members, called them hirelings of England, and the President a writer of shabby verses—promised them victory, peace, &c.

3rd March, 1814.

My dear George,

You have always been very desirous of my getting into an hospital. Now there is indeed a prospect—nay, I am in for the canvass at least. This morning, being very late in rising, having just as much life in me as to mutter harmlessly against the hair-dresser, James handed me a card —"A gentleman desired to see me." This was a surgeon of the Middlesex Hospital. Witham, one of the surgeons, had died last night, and he came to tell me that his colleagues and he had agreed to bring me in if it was agreeable. These men I only knew by name, and it is not the less agreeable that I was personally a stranger to them. It was agreed that I should call on Joberns at eleven o'clock. I met the other surgeons. They carried me to the hospital. I was received favour-

ably by the physicians, and there the matter stands. I have many opponents, and must come in on the shoulders of the nobility!! We are not permitted to canvass yet for eight days, but then I am told I have six hundred people to see, to visit.

On returning from the Middlesex Hospital to-day, I found three consultations from the three different corners of the Island—a good omen, I hope.

24th.

Dressed to a T; list made out, and cards arranged; a rainy day sets me down with nothing better to do, till I get a chariot, than write to you. Everything goes on well. The show of votes increases. I have it three to one, but still I must keep moving, and a most unpleasant business it is calling on people.

* * * * *

They say that I have had the wit to win over Whitbread, or to bribe him! that I have bribed all the medical men of the hospital! that I started long before them! that I am an anatomist! that I have a large class, and therefore the hospital has taken me up, &c., &c.; all which, you see, is evidence of my merit, or my activity, or my riches,—so that I can bear all with good temper!

* * * * *

The managers take a great charge. I know the patients will be partial to me, and that, with the character of an operator which is now open to

me, must carry me very quickly forward in practice. If all this were to be attended with the neglect of my great objects hitherto, it might be a doubtful advantage. But by the possession of an hospital, I say to my pupils "Do this!" whereas at present I must tell them why! And my museum will rapidly increase, and Johnnie (Shaw) be more rapidly brought forward. The medical men of the hospital say they have lived as a family, and expect me to be a loving brother of the community. You know how agreeable this is to me. Upon the whole, it throws a most agreeable brightness upon my prospects, in which I know you participate.

Your faithful

C. B.

7th April, 1814. 4 o'clock.

Decided—			
Bell votes .	291	Matthias votes .	83
„ proxies	78	„ proxies	21
	369		104
	104		
Majority	265		

There's for you, dear George!

A hard morning's work—bowing for three hours. I know that a word now to my friends seems more friendly than a whole oration hereafter, therefore I go to thank a few. I believe you to participate in my agreeable reflections.

C. B.

9th April, 1814.

My dear Do-Do!!!

I still feel as if I ought to be active. I have the sensation of motion, as when the mail-coach stops after a journey of three days. But, Heaven be praised, all is calm and right. What you may find in the newspapers is exactly what I said upon being called to the Board to hear the result of the Ballot announced. You see my voters came up very tolerably; there never had been so many polled in the hospital; and some paid 31*l.* 10*s.* in order to vote for me. My most active supporters have been Whitbread, Sir E. Home, Dr. Dick, Hathorn, and Sir James Shaw. In coming away from the hospital, I forgot to bring the state of the poll. I sent John back. He found the senior physician, Dr. Gower, dancing a reel in the board-room. This is better than kicking every body round. I expect to have operations there in the course of next week.

To-day we took an early dinner, and drove round by the Harrow Road, which is my favourite drive, and came in upon Hampstead to tea.

Summer has succeeded to winter without spring: in feeling the balmy air, in seeing the fleecy clouds, we say it is summer; but the total want of vegetation on the trees reminds us how lately we were covered with snow.

10th.

Is not this wonderful news? (Buonaparte's abdication.) I think France will again be peaceful

and happy, though it will take wiser heads than mine to say whether this is good or evil. I confess it goes at present with my prejudice; there is something so hateful in the pride and cruelty of Buonaparte's absolute sway. How hard he dies! and the regeneration of the countries of Europe, and the equal share of triumph of all the nations of Europe, has something very fine in it. The general voice of mankind heard at last, and the condemnation so poetically just.

Ever your affectionate

C. B.

Spurzheim gives us a lecture on Dr. Gall. This will just suit me—give me the whole nonsense and excite me.

16th May.

My dear George,

It is, indeed, long since I have written to you: I have not been in the vein. Everything goes well with me but money. I confess to you, my dear George, I am sick and heavy, and out of heart, at being so poor. Altho' I have received 530*l.* in the last four months it is gone, and more too—class, museum, &c., &c. I have a disposition to sink into seclusion until I have money,—the horses and carriage are absolute necessities. I have parted with my man-servant, and shall not take another till toward winter; so I shall live very quiet and busy here, and I hope employ the time well.

I have been long of writing, but I might as

well have let it alone, I fancy, as write to you in this humour: but it is not a humour—these are facts. However, let it go no further,—make confidant of no one relating to my matters. There is not a creature in the world, but yourself, that can retain a respectable opinion of a poor man—no, not one that I have met with: they make no distinction . . . .

I am not very sanguine in regard to the effect this journey is to have on dear May.* She has been so long ill. I sometimes think a cottage in the country would be better for her.

I was much disappointed in not seeing you on occasion of the Bankrupt Law. Surely the time will soon come. Richardson was talking with Sir Samuel Romilly, the other day, at the bar of the House of Lords. He had your large book (Commentaries on the Law of Scotland) lying on the bar before him, and as he took it up under his arm, "Do you know this book?" says he to Richardson; "it is a most admirable work."

Patients are certainly increasing, and my occupations becoming more general. We go on well in the hospital. Oh! it is of mighty consequence to me. I shall leave a good legacy to the Profession, if I live! A levée to-morrow in the museum.

Yours, C. B.

* His wife had been for some time in delicate health, and was going to Scotland under her brother's care.

21st May, 1814.

My dear George,

I have received a letter by the Russian general, the Baron Driesen, from the physician of the Emperor Alexander, conveying his Majesty's commands, shall I say, to pay the greatest attention to the Baron. He has a ball in his thigh bone. I met the Count Lieven, the Russian Ambassador, and told him I should call in Sir E. Home.

As the Ambassador strongly recommended the Baron to be taken out of town, I have more difficulty in parting with my horses. To-day I have been obliged to have them from half-past ten till four. The Baron goes to Hampstead to-day, and I shall be obliged to see him there every day.

18th June.

I wish the Emperors and Kings at the ——: I mean quietly at home, with God's blessing. The town is all agog about them. I think this success of our arms, and these honours to the country, and this pageantry of kings, not good for the country. I hope people will return to their sober minds again; but it will, I think, do harm to the honest sentiments of the nation. The Emperor and the King of Prussia are, I think, amiable beings; but how should I talk,—you have seen as much of them as I have, and know as much.

It diverted me, however, to find myself writing a kind of half certificate, half petition, to the

autocrat of all the Russias, in favour of one of his subjects, to-day. If things did not come round gradually, such matters would persuade one they were asleep or dreaming.

Yours, C. B.

July, 1814.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

The Baron Driesen comes here to-morrow, and Dr. Spurzheim to dinner. I have been to hear a lecture from him.

I have a great many patients in the hospital, and one house pupil I must have, if I pay him for it—two I should wish to have. I cannot pursue my object without them. I must have attentive young men about me, who could see to affairs of the hospital, visit a patient, and attend to directions in the room. The whole system must be kept in full operation—preparations, drawings, models, cases, lectures, clinical lectures, &c. All that must go forward—it is my passion and delight to be so engaged. To my feeling, it is more respectable than any situation which the Government, with the aid of Providence, could give me. It is that I have wrought for—I believe I may say, fought for—and therefore it is my pride. Enough of this!

I have been engaged the greater part of the day with a Parisian surgeon, a Mons. Roux, of the Hôpital de la Charité. More foreign medical officers have visited the Middlesex than ever before. If they force me to speak

French, why I must, but it would divert you to hear me.

Yours,

C. B.

TO HIS WIFE IN SCOTLAND.

LONDON, 30*th July*, 1814.

* * * * *

. . . . I am writing to you with a shaking hand, from a long drive. This morning, after examining my poor patient, and consulting with the surgeon of Tring about another gentleman, who had been thrown off the stage-coach, I went off alone, distanced those I saw toiling after me, and had three delightful hours among the woods. Some ideas intruded into my mind that will make a very pleasing and consolatory conclusion to my views of the operations of the mind—*vide* Physiology of the Brain ! ! I took a sketch; I came down from the wilderness between three and four, and here I am ! I won't go *no more* into Cassiobury Park till you go with me. I am well and busy, and as happy as heart can wish—that is to say, you would not wish me quite happy ; no, dear, only so far happy as an object, well spent hours, and good health make one. Moreover, I do assure you, and I must tell George too, that I enjoy your present happiness very much. Teach them all to love me also. George is, as of old, full of your praise. Dearest love, take care of yourself. The town is in a

great bustle. I dine with Richardson, and then we shall go into the parks.

Good night.

5th August.

I can tell you, in addition to the newspaper, that the Prince was in bad humour all the night of the fireworks—nothing pleased him. The pagoda was very pretty, but it is shocking to think that, when it took fire, one of the men threw himself from the top, intending to fall into the water, but he did not clear the bridge, and was killed.

8th.

I am quite sorry you have not seen the parks in the extraordinary state of confusion in which they are left. In Hyde Park, from Cumberland Gate to the Horse Barracks opposite the Serpentine, the booths, and encampments are continuous. It was a fine evening as I drove through, and the scene was perfectly gay.

Monday morning.

Such a morning as I have had. Here was the Baron, &c., &c., but worse than these, was a certain Mons. Roux, chir. de l'Hôpital de la Charité, who cannot speak a word of English. He has his wife and his family with him. I wish I had you here. I must give a dinner very soon; the French ladies, the Baron, the Colonel, Dr. Spurzheim—all the speakers of bad English together. When the Emperor of Russia sends

me a ring I hope it will be suitable to your finger.

I have just returned from Russell Square and the hospital, where I have some severe cases.

* * * * *

The Baron Driesen, Colonel Tawchewsky, H. Aiken, and the German doctor dined here. Everything in very good order. Russ, German, French, and English, all spoken at once, mingled in strange confusion. When I went down to dinner I found a silver mug on my right hand, and another on my left. "En gage de l'amitié de Baron Driesen." On some pretence they had got into the dining-room, and placed them on the table. Aiken whispered to me that he had 200*l.* in his pocket for me, but the General would not let him give it me. It would, he said, be more respectful to send a special messenger to-morrow. Such is General F. Driesen, of the Emperor's Imperial Guards.*

25th August.

I have read Waverley—gulped it at one meal, as usual in my way of reading novels. I like it much, and only regret that the author had not wrought and ornamented it so much higher, as he evidently could have done, and the subject borne.

* Baron Driesen's aide-de-camp had as great love for Charles Bell as the General had. He wept at parting, and, waving his hat, sobbed out, "Good-bye, *better Bell.*"

My business at present is writing a tract on gun-shot wounds, which I dare say I mentioned before, but it hangs tedious on my hands—yet I sometimes think it a very important matter. I console myself with the idea of its being very useful, and saving many a poor fellow's leg or arm.

8th September, 1814.

YES, MY DEAR GEORGE,

The hospital goes well; I hope soon to see new wards. Those we have are very full. The out-patients, too, increasing. The clinical lectures will form a great additional inducement, so I hope the Middlesex will become the "perfectionnée" of London, which is the absurd name of one of the Paris hospitals.

19th November.

I have been strangely engaged without being able to say I have been busy. To-day I finished my lectures on the brain. My demonstrations of it drew a great concourse; and my lectures on the Tuesday evening at the hospital are crowded to excess, and much interest made among the students for tickets. So far this is well. The Middlesex hospital was never so much known. There are an immense number of accidents received into this hospital, and when I take the selection of the week to give them as cases, and to remark upon them, the wonder is that such an hospital should have been so little attended to.

I have sent you a copy of my new edition of

the Surgery. It is now a very useful book; the Gun-shot chapter, I think, does me some credit. We have all the surgeons of the Peninsula at lecture, that is, all the higher officers—Sir J. McGregor, the inspector under Lord Wellington, and four surgeons of the staff. The wonder is, that this dissertation should be, not theoretical, but practical.

My Anatomy of the Brain is ripening in my head. In concluding my lectures on the nervous system, I shall this year lay open a fine system.

Ever affectionately,

C. B.

6th December.

My dear George,

This Miss O'Neill, of whom you read in the newspaper, is really a delightful creature. It is impossible to find fault with anything she does. So that, at last, you do not look for the pauses and interruption of good acting; you yield yourself to the delusion, which is never for an instant broken or interrupted by negligence or forgetfulness on the one hand, or extravagance on the other. She is about five-and-twenty, well formed, not pretty, and she has indeed nothing to captivate in her face—it is not histrionic, which, I think, is the newspaper expression.

Wilson is lecturing just now, and I am chiefly employed about these nerves. I am making experiments through the galvanic apparatus to try how far the action of nerves and muscles will

agree with the divisions of nerves which I have made by dissection. The apparatus I use is very simple. I have a zinc probe and a silver probe. By placing these in contact with the nerve and the muscle and bringing their ends together, the part is convulsed. Now, you know, what I hope to prove is, that there are two great classes of nerves, distinguishable in function, the one sensible, the other insensible! * I shall tell you of these experiments as I proceed.

I have got another officer with a ball in his thigh, but he has no Emperor to back him—no silver cups. We are all three quite well.

Yours,
C. B.

* See *ante*, March, 1810.

CHAPTER XIII.

News of the Battle of Waterloo—Journey to Brussels—The Wounded—Attends the French Hospitals—The Field of Waterloo—Buonaparte's Platform—Map of the Ground—Delay at Ostend—Whitbread—Comparison between Brussels and Edinburgh—The Wounded French—Disaffection in Brussels before Waterloo—Wounded Friends—Letter to Horner on his Return from Waterloo—Study of Nature.

1815.

WHEN on the 22nd of June the news of the battle of Waterloo reached London, Charles Bell exclaimed to his brother-in-law:

"Johnnie! how can we let this pass? Here is such an occasion of seeing gun-shot wounds come to our very door. Let us go!"

And on the 26th, he and John Shaw started for Brussels.

C. BELL TO HIS WIFE IN LONDON.

DOVER, *26th June*, 1815.

My dear love, here we are sitting by the sea-side, all bright as a cloud in sunshine; wind adverse, but fine gentle breeze. We are waiting for a king's messenger.

We are all well; Johnnie the most tired. Depend upon it I have good stamina when my mind

is engaged. Nothing but idleness affects me; say does it ever? Thanks to my own dear May for letting me off so well; not too little for a fond husband, not too much for a sensible wife. Remember my advice about driving, &c., and the roses in the cheeks, and all that

* * * * *

OSTEND, 29*th June*.

We came in here at six o'clock. Poor C., two days and nights without a morsel. What a pity! However, I am at this moment dressed, fresh and strong. The harbour and town exceedingly like —— Ostend. We have no news. One fellow tells us Buonaparte cut him troat, and Vellington in Paris, and Buonaparte head up street on a pike, 10,000 men! What this means I know not, nor care, so that the war be over. We must to breakfast.

C. B.

Notes from a pencilled note-book diary of Charles Bell's, during his absence from London.

DOVER, 26*th June*, 1815.

Came from London in the evening, amidst the utmost bustle; the fight at the Courier office a mimic representation of the battle of Mont St. John. A jolly scene of English husbandmen; everything national has now a double interest—one likes the more to see them.

29. *Ostend.* We have passed all other par-

ties. Greatly less interest here on public matters than in England. A want of life, or of formed opinions in the expression of the people.

Ghent.—By far the most beautiful town I have ever seen, fully answering the notion of an old town of the Pays Bas—a dream of spires and pinnacles quite to my taste.

Passports? Non, nous non avons pas! non!

We ought to have, for to come into Flanders, and through fortified towns, one must otherwise in time of war expect fierce interruptions, which, as now, take the agreeable reflection and right tone from us.*

Nine o'clock.—On reaching Brussels, how extraordinary! We enter by a very dirty part of the town, low; also a rag market, a fish market, a fair, a great concourse. The wounded everywhere conspicuous, dragging, pale; a great many wounded in the head. Those, of course, move about; and on the doors 5 blessés, 3 blessés, 4 blessés, and on passing the church—God!—what a piece of perspective!

30*th, at Brussels.*—A little while I must write before going to bed. But how?—in such a crowd of images—after such fatigue—fatigue which I did not know I could have undergone. I have been chiefly in four great hospitals; but I must not speak of them, only of the town, as a com-

* They set off immediately after hearing the news of the battle, and the only passports they thought of were surgical instruments! which John Shaw shook in the faces of the officials. These passed them.

mon traveller. It would be natural to say, "how stupid; how supine." But no! the excitement and the exertions have been the greatest possible; but it is past, and I must not wonder if I do not see what, as a new comer, I feel. I must not wonder that there are smiles, and that people transact their business as in common days. I understand the people have. . . . . Oh? it is too much—my head!

1*st July*, 5 *o'clock*, A.M.—I, who cannot exert myself at home without my *full* eight hours sleep, cannot rest after four hours. I write this in bed, for I must at least spare my feet.

The force with which the cuirassiers came on is wonderful. Here is an officer wounded; a sword pierced the back and upper part of the thigh, went through the wood-work and leather of the saddle, and entered the horse's body, pinning the man to the horse.

——, who only repeats what others of a certain rank say, remarked to me that Wellington might well be alarmed for his own impetuosity. While the newspapers announced Buonaparte's departure from Paris, he said, "If I can only permit him to come on far enough to show his intention distinctly, and that he thus stands committed, I think I can do for him." By-the-bye, I never can hear of Wellington saying a thing *well*, but rather as if he affected a kind of boyish slang. Either there was a complete surprise, or these three Scottish regiments were sacrificed to this inten-

tion, for they were successively cut down as they marched up, one regiment after another. Wellington said during the battle, "It will be all over by-and-by." He expected the flank movement of the Prussians; they did not come till five hours after they were expected.

It was thought that we were prepared for a great battle, yet here we are, eleven days after it, only making arrangements for the reception of the wounded. The expression is continually heard, "We were not prepared for this."

On what then did the success of the day mainly depend? On the intrepid fighting, or the bottom of the British soldier.

A colonel of the Greys was wounded in the thigh, and his horse killed. The horse fell upon him, and he was kept staked there, a few feet from the muzzle of the guns; he heard his men swearing, and wondering at the fighting of the French. He was not safe until the British begun to play their rockets on the French.

3rd July, Monday morning.—I could not sleep for thinking of the state of the wounded French. "Pansez! pansez, majeur docteur," or "coupez, coupez," sounded in my ears. I rose at four o'clock, and wrote to the surgeon-in-chief, and have taken on me to perform all the capital operations on the wounded French—no small effort. I must, therefore, resign other objects, having, however, done more than I expected.

By having the names of the hospitals, their

surgeons, and the list of cases, my other objects may be obtained at home. Sleep I must have—the want of it alarms me.

* * * * *

After three days of the most severe application to the duties I had undertaken (of which see my note book *), I rested, but found myself again so called upon by the interest of the cases, that I could not set out. Thursday I gave to the field, and a few cases of officers, whom I saw in the evening.

The Field of Waterloo.

From a little beyond Brussels the road is through the forest of Soignies—fifteen miles to Waterloo; the road unincumbered, but by horrid smells. Waterloo, a quiet little village, in which all is already quiet and tranquil.

Here we mounted—the forest still continuing. We at last emerged from the avenue, the field of battle opening before us to our right and left. The first note of our arrival on the scene was the disorder on the left hand side of the road by the bivouac of horses, I suppose the draught-horses

* The surgical notes were inserted in another note book, accompanied by Charles Bell's sketches of the wounded. These sketches, afterwards reproduced in water-colours, excelled in force and effect any professional paintings hitherto attempted. Many of them, together with some in oil, are now along with the Windmill Street Museum, in the College of Surgeons, Edinburgh; others in the University College of London; and seventeen were presented by his widow, in 1867, to the Royal Hospital, Netley, along with the note-book.

of the ammunition. A little further on we saw collected 132 pieces of fine French guns, I think of twelve and six long field pieces, and ten-inch howitzers—beautiful cannon. Some of these were cast since Buonaparte's return, some in the time of Louis, and some had "Liberty and Equality" inscribed on them.

Here we took guides, and turned off to the left of the road to Nivelles. Immediately on the right of the road there had been a tug of war, from the ground cut with hoofs and wheels, and the remains of ammunition. We advanced along the plateau to the centre of the British position. Along the whole brow of the elevated ground were many recently buried, very, very many graves, arms, knapsacks, hats, letters, books. It is inconceivable the numbers of such things strewed about. Riding over this hill we looked down upon Hougoumont. We returned to the farm of La Haye, where the Brunswickers kept possession for the greater part of the day; were destroyed, and the house battered with bullets. Ascending the plateau of ——, we again descended to the right of his position upon the farm of Hougoumont. We walked round the narrow lane behind it, and entered where the Guards died. This beautiful farm, a complete thing, was set fire to by the rockets; it is burned and a ruin, all but one little corner, on which is written "the quarters of General Byng."

The gate towards the south, and looking to the position of Buonaparte, is shattered with shot.

The Guards here cut down the trees in front; some of the standing trees have sixty shot in them; the ground is ploughed, and the trees cut by shot. In rear of this position is a great heap of reeking bones, probably from the collection of the Guards. In front, and at the south gate within the wood, a very large heap of buried bodies; the French were repulsed in their repeated attacks upon this point.

Passing through the little wood which surrounds the farm-house, which is like a little part of forest scenery, the road or avenue leading through it, we come to the ditch without where the French had lain in great strength. The ground was trodden down, the corn quite laid.

From the farm of Hougoumont we rode over rising ground, covered with standing corn, and through the field we could still observe the movements of the French, making streets through the fields, leaving the corn neat, cut as it were, no straggling. They must have moved on in deep column and in numbers, completely to beat the corn into the ground. About half a mile of ascent brought us to the position of Buonaparte.

This is the highest ground in the Pays Bas. A noble expanse is before the eye, and the circumstance of the ground still imprinted with the tyrant's foot, the place where the aides-de-camp galloped to and fro, the whole extent of this important field under the eye, fill the imagination.

I climbed up one of the pillars of the scaffold-

ing, as I was wont to do, after birds-nests, but I found me more heavy. We got a ladder from the farm court; it reached near the first platform. I mounted and climbed with some difficulty; none of the rest would venture, so I feel rather youthful.

The view magnificent, I was only one-third up the machine, yet it was a giddy height. Here Buonaparte stood surveying the field. What name for him but—Macbeth, a man who stands alone. There is something magnificent in this idea; then, exalted to a giddy height; and how much further to fall than to the ground? his friends dispersed, his squadrons broken, all in *déroute;* and well he knew—for he seems to know mankind *well*—he knew the consequence.

He must have turned to the right of the scaffolding, and joined the road, the Chaussée, a little to the side of La Belle Alliance. There he must have met the wreck of his forces. A little further on the road his carriage was found.

This position of Buonaparte is most excellent; the machine had been placed by the side of the road, but he ordered it to be shifted. The shifting of this scaffolding shows sufficiently the power of confidence and the resolution of the man. It is about sixty feet in height. I climbed upon it four times the length of my body, by exact measurement, and this was only the first stage. I was filled with admiration of a man of his habit of life, who could stand perched on a height of

sixty-five feet above everything, and contemplate, see, and manage such a scene. Already silence dwells here; for although it is mid-day, and the sun bright and all shining in gladness, yet there is a mournful silence contrasted with the scene which has been so recently acting. No living thing is here—no kites, no birds of any kind; nothing but a few wretched women and old men, scattered on a height at a distance, and who are employed in gathering balls.

We descended towards the south-east, crossing the road from Genappes. On a rising ground to the right of the road must have been the bivouac of the French before the battle—the fields quite broken down, ox-heads, rumps, veal, pigs, sheep, half-mangled and eaten, sticks and the fires and comforts snatched, for the place indicates an immense mass of men in *peaceable* possession. Where there are the marks of men further towards Waterloo, there are marks of struggle, loss, and déroute. We now crossed the road, and making a circle round the cottage of La Belle Alliance, came upon the ground occupied by the French during the battle *en potence.*

From this, down the hill, opposite the British heights, there has been much destruction of life. The balls are thickly strewn; the letters, books, caps, halters, pack-saddles, &c., cover the whole ground. The Prussians must have broken in here, and the marks of the horses' hoofs all in direction to the Chaussée of Genappes.

Picking up these letters, you are at once carried home to the cottage of the poor fellow who fell. It is a letter from his father or his mother. We found letters which he had received when he was in Spain. There seems to have been a little book of manœuvres which is the code of the French soldiers. We found many. I picked up one stained with blood. I shall preserve it for the sake of the commentary written in the annals of this bloody day.

Every French soldier carries a little book of the receipt of pay, without which he cannot receive anything. It is a printed form, and in the beginning is a code of military punishments. It was very remarkable—indeed, most extraordinary—without knowing this, without alighting and examining the books—to find that wherever French had been slain there lay a *library in confusion.* The letters were all French and German, with very little exception.

We now advanced in the direction of the French attack upon our left. How natural for a Frenchman to anticipate success with such a general looking down upon him!—with the knowledge of such perfect arrangement—such a strength of men who could not be conquered—such an eye and soul directing such an immense force. For we could now judge of it, we had reached the extreme of their right.

In ascending the heights to the left of Mont St. Jean, we saw the marks of the great tug of

war *—the mortal strife—here Ponsonby fell—here Picton—Col. Hay . . . .

Alost, Friday.—Dined here. While I write, our ears are regaled by a very pretty party of musicians, which to me has ever been a great delight. These airs carry me on the wind, and the good hock and the wind together carry me to "High Germany,"† and God knows where—even to the length of my old friend, Baron Driesen, whose manner of playing and singing was like these continentals. *A votre santé, ma May!* And now for England—aye, for England.

Ostend, Sunday.—Still here. It is vain to say how much I might have done in Brussels—how much engaged at home. Here we lie like a log on the water. We attempted to cross the rough sea at the mouth of the harbour. I was angry with myself to be engaged in so boyish an attempt. The man-of-war's boat put back, and ours was small and weak, and staved in on one side.

Still the wind right in—right into the mouth of the harbour. The only place I can persuade myself to be comfortable is in the cabin of this vessel, which is to carry me to England. It is like a step homewards to carry me to you, dear.

* Charles Bell drew out a map of the ground, and the different positions of the armies during the fight, attaching it to his case book of Waterloo. The ground having dried rapidly under the hot sun, after the rain, the prints of the battle were distinct.

† There are many allusions to "High Germanie" in old Scotch ballads, of which he was very fond.

Ostend is a miserable town to be so large—a miserable harbour, for it is often wind-locked, and a high surf dashes along the harbour-mouth, with sand-banks, against which the bottom is apt to bump. This morning a boat was dashed to pieces which attempted to get out. The lives saved; but this would be bad news for Soho Square if it arrived before us.

We hear much of the Allies in Paris, of the Armistice, and of Whitbread! Alas, how sincerely I lament him. He did much for me in a matter* I had much at heart. He seemed to have a hearty, kindly manner to me quite at variance with his public character. He seemed a man made to buffet with the world—to kill himself! I am yet inclined to say it is a lie.

Eight o'clock.—It is this, more than the state of unpleasant suspense in which I am kept, that frets me with the time. How precious is a just way of thinking, a love for mankind, a desire for doing good, which I think was likely to prevent a man from letting this gloom overshadow him and obscure his reason; besides, is there not

* His election as Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital, in which Whitbread took a most active part. There is a ward in the Middlesex, instituted by Mr. Whitbread's father, especially for cases of cancer, and the surgeons are bound to examine every new suggestion for the cure or amelioration of that disease. Charles Bell promised to attend to this ward, and he fulfilled his promise. He wrote on the subject, and made drawings, but they were so distressing to look upon that he could not bear to publish them. He became much sought after for his knowledge and success in such cases, and was especially happy in quieting the minds of those who erroneously believed that they had this fatal disease.

a terrible disregard of the feelings of others in this act?

I'll to the deck again, and contemplate the weary scene as the wind goes down. How precious, dear friends! and how dearer they become in this desolation amidst a throng. The night is cold, grey, northern, and unkind. The wind rattles in the shrouds, the tide is down, and the harbour without activity.

The following letters are the only two written by Charles Bell during his absence. The first is that to which Mr. Lockhart refers as having induced Sir Walter Scott to proceed to Waterloo,* after which he published "Paul's Letters."

BRUSSELS, 1*st July*, 1815.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I feel the lively interest excited by my present situation as if it were something improperly indulged in until I communicate with you. This country, the finest in the world, has been of late quite out of our minds. I did not in any degree anticipate the pleasure I should enjoy, the admiration forced from me in coming into one of these antique towns, or journeying through this rich garden. Can you recollect the time when there were gentlemen meeting at the Cross of Edinburgh? or those whom we thought such? They are all collected here. You see the old gentlemen

* See Lockhart's "Life of Scott," vol. v. p. 54.

with their scraggy necks sticking out of the collars of their coats—their old-fashioned, square-skirted coats, their canes, their hats; and when they meet, the formal bow, the hat off to the ground, and the powder flying in the wind. I could divert you with the resemblances to old Scottish faces among the peasants, but I noted them at the time, and I write to you of things which you will not find in my pocket-book—only of such.

I have just returned from seeing the French wounded received in their hospital. When laid out naked, or almost so, 100 in a row of low beds upon the ground, tho' wounded, low, exhausted, tho' *beaten*, you would still conclude with me that those were fellows capable of marching, unopposed, from the west of Europe to the east of Asia. Strong, thick-set, hardy veterans, brave spirits and unsubdued, they cast their wild glance upon you, their black eyes and brown cheeks finely contrasted with their fresh sheets; you would much admire their capacity of adaptation. These fellows are brought from the field after lying many days on the ground, many dying, many in the agony, many miserably racked with pain and spasms, and the fellow next to him mimics him and gives it a tune. "Ah, ha! vous chantez bien!" How they are wounded, you may see in my notes. But I must not have you to lose this present impression upon me of the formidable nature of these fellows—as exemplars of the race of France. It is a forced praise, for

from all I have seen and all I have heard of their fierceness, their cruelty, and bloodthirstiness, I cannot convey to you my detestation of this race of trained banditti. Whether they are to be put to the sword, or kept in subjection until other habits come upon them, I am convinced that these men cannot be left to the bent of their propensities.

This superb city is now ornamented with the finest groups of armed men that the most romantic fancy could dream of. I was struck with the words of a friend. "I saw," said he, "that man returning from the field on the 16th (?). (This was a Brunswicker, of the Black or Death Hussars); he was wounded, and his arm amputated on the field; he was among the first who came in; he rode straight and stark upon his horse, the bloody clouts about his stump, pale as death, but upright, with a remarkable stern expression of feature, as if loath to lose his revenge." These are troops very remarkable in their fine military appearance, their dark dress, strong manly features, and fair mustaches, which give a more than usual character of fierceness.

You know how I live at home; I wrote this last night at one o'clock. I was up, writing a lecture on the general arrangement after a battle, at five this morning. I write at night and in the morning, and go into the hospital after breakfast; but when I have taken several sketches and notes I go into a garden in the park, take coffee, and

make out my drawing, and look over my observations. In this John Shaw assists, by taking notes of cases. Of news I have not thought since I left England, so that I am a true Belgian.

Before the battle there were many in Brussels known to be disaffected; the friends of the French were many, and in system. During the battle there was a simultaneous movement of alarm everywhere. Four horsemen rode into the centre of the Belgian hospital, giving the alarm that the French had entered; the same occurred in most places. The bridges were broken down, and carts were placed across the roads to make confusion and to prevent *retraite*; many of these partisans were shot. However, the impression on those officers with whom I have conversed, is, that the people are very grateful for the victory, and the country saved from so formidable a visitation.

Beside a case which I was visiting to-day, lay a woman wounded with gun-shot—French. It is dreadful to visit these wounded French, the perpetual plaintive cry of "Pansez, pansez, monsieur docteur, pansez ma cuisse. Ah! je souffre, je souffre beaucoup, beaucoup, beaucoup." The second Sunday, many not yet dressed.

C. B.

C. BELL TO HIS WIFE IN LONDON.

2nd July, 1815.
BRUSSELS, HÔTEL D'ANGLETERRE.

———,

I take up this sheet for you, and to please you give you a few names, because I know you will not be satisfied with a report of hospital cases. Colonel Harris is struck in the shoulder, and must go home; he looks remarkably well. Colonel Dick was struck in the shoulder, the ball did not penetrate; he has gone on this morning to the army with the desire to command his regiment in Paris. I had a note from General Adam, and examined his wound; the ball has penetrated between the bones of his leg; it remains lodged, and will come out some day without the aid of surgery. The next whom I saw were Major General Sir Edward Barnes, Captain Elphinstone, Lieutenant Reynolds, and lastly, whom I like the most, was a perfect little gentleman, Sir Henry Hardinge, who has lost his forearm.

It is hot and fatiguing walking in the Great Square, and I must mind other matters. . . .

In general the wounded are doing well. I believe I shall be taken to any that are not.

There is a pretty girl who stands to sing to a low organ sweet German airs. Oh, you cannot think how I enjoy a little visionary scene, a little romance, and nothing raises the fit so much as these charming foreign airs.

12 o'clock.

I must to bed. I was early up, and to-morrow I shall be in the hospital by six o'clock; I ride after dinner. This afternoon I went through the Place d'Armès, and through the park, which is a square, more magnificent than anything you ever saw. Behind the Stadthouse I mounted the old boulevards, the ramparts, and riding thus elevated round the town, saw it to great advantage. I then rode into the famous Allée Verte, where, mingling with the promenaders and horsemen, are cannon stores, and horses bridled to the stakes —a fine martial sight. The canal is here, too, filled with ships with military stores; altogether, to me a new and singular scene. Yesterday afternoon I took a ride towards the south; came round beyond the old fortifications. The Spanish town and wall still remain, and over them are seen, not the houses, but the antique rich spires which, illuminated as the sun went down, presented the most picturesque appearance. . . . .

Great hurry—many people wanting me—have undertaken to perform all the operations upon the French—two days' work; after which I shall set off, having seen and done so much that I do not think I shall go to Antwerp. Adieu! then, my home, my house!

C.

One letter I find has been stopped at Ostend—the others may have been. I write to say that I am well, and have done more than I contemplated.

I meant to say only that I set off from this on *Wednesday*—in short, I shall be home within the time. I shall have much to tell you; be kind to yourself. We have had no letters. Again, adieu, my own dear wife.

Yours, C. BELL.

FROM CHARLES BELL TO FRANCIS HORNER, ESQ., M.P.

34, SOHO SQUARE, LONDON.
July, 1815.

MY DEAR HORNER,

I write this to you after being some days at home engaged in my usual occupations, and consequently disengaged of the horrors of the battle of Waterloo. I feel relief in this, for certainly if I had written to you from Brussels, I should have appeared very extravagant. An absolute revolution took place in my economy, body and soul, so that I, who am known to require eight hours sleep, found first three hours, then one hour and a half, sufficient, after days of the most painful excitement and bodily exertion.

After I had been five days engaged in the prosecution of my object, I found that the best cases, that is, the most horrid wounds, left totally without assistance, were to be found in the hospital of the French wounded; this hospital was only forming. They were even then bringing in these poor creatures from the woods. It is impossible to convey to you the picture of human misery continu-

ally before my eyes. What was heart-rending in the day was intolerable at night; and I rose and wrote, at four o'clock in the morning, to the chief surgeon, offering to perform the necessary operations upon the French. At six o'clock I took the knife in my hand, and continued incessantly at work till seven in the evening; and so the second and third day.

All the decencies of performing surgical operations were soon neglected. While I amputated one man's thigh, there lay at one time thirteen, all beseeching to be taken next; one full of entreaty, one calling upon me to remember my promise to take him, another execrating. It was a strange thing to feel my clothes stiff with blood, and my arms powerless with the exertion of using the knife! and more extraordinary still, to find my mind calm amidst such variety of suffering; but to give one of these objects access to your feelings was to allow yourself to be unmanned for the performance of a duty. It was less painful to look upon the whole than to contemplate one object.

When I first went round the wards of the wounded prisoners my sensations were very extraordinary. We had everywhere heard of the manner in which these men had fought—nothing could surpass their devotedness. In a long ward, containing fifty, there was no expression of suffering, no one spoke to his neighbour. There was a resentful, sullen rigidness of face, a fierceness in

their dark eyes as they lay half covered in the sheets.

Sunday.—I was interrupted, and now I perceive I was falling into the mistake of attempting to convey to you the feelings which took possession of me, amidst the miseries of Brussels. After being eight days among the wounded I visited the field of battle. The view of the field, the gallant stories, the charges, the individual instances of enterprise and valour recalled me to the sense the world has of victory and Waterloo. But this is transient. A gloomy, uncomfortable view of human nature is the inevitable consequence of looking upon the whole as I did—as I was forced to do.

It is a misfortune to have our sentiments so at variance with the universal impression. But there must ever be associated with the honours of Waterloo, to my eyes, the most shocking sights of woe, to my ear accents of entreaty, outcry from the manly breast, interrupted forcible expressions of the dying, and *noisome smells.* I must show you my notebooks, for as I took my notes of cases generally by sketching the object of our remarks, it may convey an excuse for this excess of *sentiment.*

Faithfully yours,

C. BELL.

FROM G. J. BELL TO MRS. C. BELL AT SANDGATE.

SOHO SQUARE, 17*th August*, 1815.

Charles has his rooms full: I meant, in writing to you, to sit where we were together, in sight of all your things, as if I were chatting with you, but I was chased away by a gentleman and his daughter coming for consultation, and on going to the dining-room I found the lobby table covered with four or five more hats than used to be there. I need scarcely tell you that Charles is well, and looking well. He is envious of my "crop," and envious of the grace and beauty of my youthful looks. He has cut off his *tail* and combed out the powder, and dressed himself young!! Sometimes remember one who loves you sincerely.

G. J. B.

C. BELL TO HIS WIFE.

31*st August*, 1815.

I have been hard at work all day. I was pleased in opening "Evelyn" to find the first sentence so strongly expressive of my constant wish—"a small house and a large garden. I never," says he, "had any desire so strong and so like covetousness."

> And thus with no design beyond my wall,
> Whole and entire to lie,
> In no inactive ease, and no inglorious poverty.

This I would fain think a natural pleasure to look forward to, and yet I must not repine, for I

think I must be counted happy, considering all things, and most of all in the possession of a darling wife.

> The fairest garden in her looks,
> And in her mind the wisest books.

I must tell you this is no less than Cowley, lest you should think I am falling quite behind, and into youthful follies, *without* their apology. . . .

I expect a letter by-and-by, and this is the answer to it!

TO G. J. BELL.

23rd October, 1815.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

This being a new era in my lectures, you naturally wish to know all about them, and I am in the vein—which I am not always when I write to you—to tell you.

In regard to my surgical class I have completely established myself independent, which is a glorious thing. You know it was prophesied that I should not have a pupil, and even Johnnie shook his head in dolefulness about the surgery. But I swore I would do the thing; and, in short, I have a respectable, attentive class of seventy, and upwards of sixty on the books. I yesterday made the perpetual pupils of the Middlesex hospital free to the surgical lectures, which has the best effect, for by this, instead of giving one long, too long clinical lecture on Tuesdays, I shall be enabled to close every evening with clinical observations. Yesterday I gave a lecture of an hour and a half, on

anatomy; one hour on surgery, and one hour on clinical surgery. John Shaw heard a little Scotchman after lecture say, "This has been a glorious day's work. I could sit and hear him lecture till eleven o'clock."

15th December.

To-day I have received a very sad letter from Tunbridge Wells * . . . . What a varied life this is, and how ills press more and more on us to reconcile us to have done with it. All my labours go on prosperously, but to what end? An insect in the sun is just as happy and as wise. Our best pleasures are good habits.

And what think you of the Peace? How much more wholesome a little chastisement would have been than these glorious victories? The state of the world as to Government, and all that, is enough to disgust one. I, for my part, have no pleasure but in anatomy. You will say that it is that I may become the captain of anatomists; but why then have I such inexhaustible delight in the whole face of nature? No, it is the pleasure I have in investigating *structure*.† Everything there so perfect, so curiously fitted, and leading you by little and little to the comprehension of a wisdom so perfect that I am forced to believe that, in the moral world, things are not really left in all that disarray which our partial view would persuade us

* Where his wife was on account of health.

† To him this was a large word; these investigations were the delight of his life.

they are. But sure I am that the study of what is called nature is infinitely agreeable, and the contemplation of the moral state is most offensive to the notions of rectitude which nature has implanted. I wish I could persuade you to dip a little into natural history and structure. How much I regret that I did not make myself acquainted with natural history. But I have enough to do. My dear fellow, I labour continually, and have such fine things to do if I had but time. To-day I finished my lectures on the nervous system, on the senses, and find that my more copious and earnest manner, and the notions I have got become more and more attractive. So we roll on; good night, I have your agreeable letter. Perseverance, with a right character, will do wonders both with you and me, on that score, I have no doubt. But of all things take care of health.

C. B.

CHAPTER XIV.

Cline's Hunterian Oration—Surgeon of the "Northumberland" and Buonaparte—A Dream—Desire to Improve Military Hospitals—Conference with Rennie, the Engineer—Colonel Hutchinson's Life—Professor Michel—Speaking French—Increase of Practice—How best to Publish his Nervous System—Visit from Mrs. John Bell—Praises of George's "Big Book"—Paper for the Royal Society—John Shaw in Paris—Wilson's Sudden Death—Effect on the School.

1816 TO 1821.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

3rd January, 1816.

A GOOD new year to you, Do-do!

Here we are as if nothing had happened, and yet our old friend is gone, and we are coquetting it already with a new, and *Time* shows his face most unwillingly, peeping thro' a thick veil of smoke and fog.

* * * * *

2nd February.

Three days ago we had the Hunterian Oration in the College given by old Cline, who, you know, is the old lecturer in the borough school. Never was there anything finer—very Whiggish, giving all to the influence of freedom, and with a very noble air and dignified English manner. He put the matter of John and William Hunter on the

right footing, and altogether it was to me quite refreshing. I never was more delighted; it wrought a revolution in me, and gave Marion much occasion to laugh. I am very easily moved, easily distempered and cast down. My business goes on very badly at present. I am quite in the blue devils about it.

22nd.

I must make an additional essay on the combination of instinctive muscles in expression. I have made all that matter out. You would be pleased to see how attentive and good-humoured the crowded class was—is.

In "An Account of the State of Surgery of London, by an Hospital Surgeon of Paris," you will find me among others; and the praise is great, since he says that I am one of the few Englishmen who operate, like a Frenchman, quickly and with *grace*, without affectation!

Yours, C. B.

TO HIS WIFE IN EDINBURGH.

19th August, 1816. 12 o'clock—night.

. . . . You would be quite pleased to see me. You have not so fine a gentleman north of the Tweed. I have got a green coat and white waistcoat, and look as bright as can be. I was invited to meet the surgeon of the "Northumberland," to whom Buonaparte took so kindly. But first of my green coat! I thought I should be grave while you are gone, and resolved on grey

and a broad-brimmed hat; but being of an easy temper, and easily prevailed upon—that failing by which you now profit idling in Scotland—these fellows here have made me array myself thus.

I see how Buonaparte has taken this Scotchman to be his Boswell, and to communicate certain things to the people of England, for he intends to publish his conversations. I had sucked a good deal for you; now we shall see it all in print; only this is certain, that Buonaparte is a mild, playful creature to those about him, and most beloved; this little surgeon is quite fascinated.

Yes, dear, "I have more than twopence in my pocket." To-day I brought home with me Collins's, Grey's, Dryden's, Campbell's poems! all to cheer me, and curious to know what I would now think of Dryden's fables, which I verily believe gave me my portion of romance, being one of the very few books I read in my youth.

Here are the candles which shut out the world and give me to you.

Dear heart, adieu.

C. B.

TO G. J. BELL.

August, 1816.

My dear George,

A—— has been with me these three days. What an odd fish it is! He will tell you his astonishment in visiting my collection, its magni-

tude, beauty, and the richness of the morbid preparations.

We are well, only that my stomach has become unusually delicate. I am at a loss what to feed upon. I don't think the world would be worth living in without my *tea!* and yet I fear I must give it up. Rolls, the delight of my heart (stomach), I have been obliged to give up already.

28th August, 1816.

This fellow A—— is always at my elbow, and, uniting with my indolence, has kept me very idle. He is a creature of extraordinary memory, and remembers all that happened twenty years ago as yesterday. As he came up Dean's Street, he said, "It is just twenty years ago to an hour and day that I went to *Cult*, and I remember seeing you come out from among the trees with thick shoes and white stockings! Ay! and next day Mr. George Bell went into Edinburgh, and he wrote you a letter, which you read to me, all about John's election." This talk is very curious, and inclines me to sit and chat.

A DREAM. 1817.*

I have been sometimes tempted to ask whether sensible men dream the absolute nonsense which crosses me in sleep? I have often been surprised by the quickness and facility of invention we have in sleeping.

* This strange little record was found in C. Bell's repositories.

Last night I had a dream rather more poetical than I am commonly indulged with. I thought I was at a play, and had my Shakspeare and a pencil in my hand, to mark what I most admired in the acting. And after the play, I thought I continued to write, until finding the light dim, I looked around and found all the audience gone, the whole house dark, excepting only a small taper which I held in my hand.

I attempted to make my way from the boxes thro' the house, when my taper was blown out by the wind from a side-door. I now distinguished a faint light upon the further side of the stage, to which I endeavoured, with difficulty, to make my way. I had arrived in the pit, when I heard a noise like what a player makes behind the scenes to announce his entrance, then a tramping of feet and clashing of swords, and presently there rushed out several men pursuing one whom, in real passion, they stabbed and murdered.

I was left horror-struck, the only witness of this act, alone with the dead man. Instead of calling to be let out of the theatre, I wanted resolution, and resolved to remain all night where I was. I thought I had been about two hours in this darkness and solitude, when my attention was awakened by the softest music, the softest movement of the organ, as if from under or beyond the stage, while along its front a pale light appeared, not like the lamps, but of a greenish colour, or more like the light of day

when it streams thro' the gallery windows of a summer theatre.

This light became gradually more vivid, the objects more distinct. Figures appeared upon the stage, at first in chalky paleness, but suddenly they assumed animation, threw themselves into various attitudes, became lively and talkative. In short I discovered, I knew not how, that I was happy enough to see before me the late famous actors of Old Drury, and that these celebrated ghosts were wont nightly, at a certain hour, to re-visit the scene of their achievements, and frisk it in their old characters.

1818.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

15th January, 1818.

And what are you about, my dear George? Labouring hard?—indeed, I may say, so am I, though it is not an hour since I contrived to finish "Rob Roy." The story has some interest, but I think there is less genius than in his last, and he is very shabby to Rob and to poor Miss Diana. He seems to feel himself unable to finish the sweet sketch he has given of the young lady.

Yes, I am hard set to it,—lecturing and hospitaling morning and night. Patients at this moment remarkably scarce; and yet, before the 9th of the month, I had touched, by various means, 100*l*. It is like the wind—no one knoweth whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. Marion

I think remarkably well at present, which is always a sunny blink.

It is a long time since I wrote the other side. I send this to make you look after a small packet which will come by this day's mail—my first Report of the second volume. You will see its matter and its import. I beg of you, with all haste, to look it over, for I mean to print it as soon as I can, and send it to the Duke of York * and others before I publish. Nobody has read it here. I shall afterwards give you an idea of what I mean to say to the Duke of York.

C. B.

2nd March, 1818.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

If I am to be anything, it is from connection with Natural Philosophy by Anatomy; and every day the subject enlarges upon my view, so that the distress I feel in not being able to find time for certain investigations, makes me very unhappy. I wish to publish my essay on Expression, which is complete in my mind, but not written. I wish to enter upon the comparative anatomy of the nervous system, which I can make a thing sur-

* Charles Bell's mind had been long turned to the state of the Military Hospitals. While at Brussels he had watched carefully the system, in those that came under his immediate inspection, and, the same feeling which prevented him from making experiments even on the lower animals, impelled him to do his best to save the soldiers from unnecessary suffering, and to obtain for them advantages which they had not hitherto had in the routine of military hospitals. On this subject he addressed the Duke of York, but the time was not yet come for carrying out the reforms he proposed.

prising. I long for time to enter on some experiments on the circulation of the blood, to prove that there is a principle quite overlooked in philosophy and physiology, viz., that there is no attraction between the blood and the solids, and that, *therefore*, is the feeble heart equal to the circulation. I have invented several instruments for the prosecution of this matter.

I have *resolved* to address men of science (and for the purpose, I have requested a *conference* with Rennie the engineer) on the uses of Anatomy, by which I shall show them how God Almighty makes arches and ropes, and many other things they attempt. I think I shall make that a paper to the Edinburgh Royal Society. I have, besides, some lesser matters of anatomy which I wish to prosecute. Then here is this load of hospital observations on my back. I cannot tell you how much the circumstance of your undertaking Robert's lectures,* and your consequent want of time to help me, retards me. I was wont to depend upon you.

* This refers to George Bell having, for two years, lectured on Conveyancing in the University of Edinburgh, for behoof of the widow and family of his eldest brother, who died in 1816. The anxieties and sorrows connected with that event were the principal subjects of correspondence between George and Charles in 1816 and 1817.

C. BELL TO HIS WIFE IN SCOTLAND.

September, 1818.

My May is with her mother, my great rival.

* * * * *

I have been reading Colonel Hutchinson's Life. How his Lucy loved him! You must read this book. Indeed, so pleasant is it, that I shall buy it. It is one of those which, when you look on the letters of the back in a library, must have the effect of making you more respect both man and woman. He has been an excellent gentleman, and in her eyes lovely, from being good, mild, and spirited. She says, "I shall pass by all the little amorous relations, which, if I could take the paynes to relate, would make a true history of more handsome management of Love than the best romancers describe." Is not this true of all married folk of any soul? . . . .

28*th*.

I wish you were at home; among other things, to receive a German lady, the wife of Professor Michel. She speaks no English, and is cooped up in lodgings while he is going about among the stupid medicos.

I have just been performing a serious operation, and that, you know, is always severe upon me. I think I shall take a run to Box Hill to-morrow.

Quick! quick! and get well, and come back again. This is the most stupid life imaginable.

I really have not interest enough in anything to drag me this way or that. If I were once set a running, I think I should run a long way ere I would be at the trouble of pulling the check.

FROM C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

21*st September*, 1818.

My dear George,

I have a French master every night, and twist and turn, and splutter the French to admiration. A great many foreigners visit me, walk the hospital, or see the museum; and now, after letting them spit a little English, I can say, "Ayez la bonté, Monsieur, de parler Français!" I have the pleasure of taking off the snaffle-bridle from their heads "et la langue n'a point d'arrêt." A Frenchman—by the bye, they are not French, but I shall have out my say—a Frenchman is nothing unless he speaks French; he is no better than a savage beast confined in a cage; he has no room to move; he cannot show off the natural motions of his spirit. They suppose that they must think when they speak the language of a thinking nation.

When your Montesquieu returned from his travels, he had the vulgarity to say, "l'Allemagne était fait pour y voyager, l'Italie pour y séjourner, l'Angleterre pour y penser, la France pour y vivre." This, I believe, is mere nonsense; but it is said by Monsieur, and written by D'Alembert. Now, all this is to show you that,

though late, I keep to my purpose of reading the *Esprit des Lois.*

My present occupation is writing out my lectures on Physiology, that is to say, some of them; and in that, one object is to show the superiority of English physiology to French, which is so improperly popular.

C. B.

5th December, 1818.

My dear George,

Rather a remarkable change has taken place in my situation. I feel a course of different ideas. I am on the street driving along for the greater part of the day. I am hard wrought. Wilson has lost a child—a girl grown—so I am again lecturing morning and evening. I make generally one visit before the hospital; one or two betwixt one and two o'clock; again out after lecture—as to-day—far into the City to *take* two guineas; back to dinner, twenty minutes before six; at six, again at my evening lecture,—and, after all, somebody forgotten. This sort of life, I know, you are kind enough to approve of for me. But I think this driving after business will prove a poor business, in one sense. It is a wreck of mind. However, I am fast accomplishing that which we all wished and expected by my coming here, but I could as soon give myself an aquiline nose, as pursue practice, and run after patients, as I see some do!

This has been one of the quietest, pleasantest

mornings I have spent for some time. I am at rest; nothing very troublesome to do to-morrow; enough on my book of patients to see the week is provided for; and I have been sitting in this way, in this my little study, with a cheerful ray of sunshine reflected on me.

* * * * *

Matters look so well with me, that I think I shall be able to make that last and greatest advance this coming year—a house in the country; and then you will find that I have something better in my composition than my friends dream of. I love Nature and Nature's God, with a sense of devotion and delight inferior to no man, and I have never for a day let myself be lost in mere worldliness. But in order to satisfy myself for this indulgence, I have been convinced that the scheme is not only practicable, but absolutely necessary to Marion and John Shaw. They must very often sleep out of town. As for myself, I have nothing interesting in me. I am as strong as a horse.

Yours, C. B.

1819.

5th August, 1819.

My dear George,

After my two months' solitude, Marion and you coming together made a remarkable change, and when you went away, in the morning when I first awoke, I still had the expectation of

finding you near, and turned into your room not aware of what I wanted, till I saw the barrenness and vacancy of a room lately occupied by one so dear.

When you left us, I told you I was to sit down to my notes of the nervous system. Believe me, this is quite an extraordinary business. I think the observations I have been able to make furnish the materials of a grand system which is to revolutionise all we know of this part of anatomy—more than the discovery of the circulation of the blood. I have a good deal still to do; how to bring it forward I do not know. I think by lectures in the first place; then by a little essay, explaining the outline of a new system, and finally, by magnificent engravings of the whole nervous system.

17th.

I continue to make drawings of cuddies (donkeys), the moment I get out of London. I hope my sketches will be liked among you. I have great pleasure in drawing, and only want encouragement! In the meantime, I am making gigantic drawings of the nervous system for my class.*

18th September.

I am resolved to have three days' driving

* He was accustomed to make little sketches with the remnants of the colours prepared on his palette for his "Gigantic Class Drawings." These he called "birlins," the name given by bakers to the scraps of dough taken from their larger loaves. Many lovely "birlins" are still preserved.

before the first of October. I shall set off to-morrow in the phaeton with Marion by my side, and old Coachie behind. I must make some sketches, for nobody has any of mine but you—and there are none here but two cows and a calf. I have great delight in sketching—I should say, drawing. Anybody, to see me, would suppose the pencil is never out of my hand; but, in fact, I have been very busy all this summer and autumn in other ways, and now require a few days' rest.

My surgical lectures are in comparative order. I have of late been looking over my anatomical ones also, and I have made some fine class-room studies; so, if I were to die, my lectures would be found in state to be made use of.

You may keep this letter, as I hereby declare that all I possess of property is to be left to you for Marion's behoof.

Adieu. Yours ever,

C. B.

1820.

12th August, 1820.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Mrs. John Bell is with us, poor little soul and you may well believe that, what with her occasional observations, what with perusing John's manuscripts, I am as low in spirits as

* John Bell died at Rome, April 16th, and the brothers at once requested his widow to return home. The first visit was to Charles, in Soho Square.

needs to be. Many of these manuscripts are merely note-books written with pencil before the pictures and statues. There is a great deal good, but not written out. They are exactly like his surgical papers—sometimes a large portion written at length, then heads of discourse, then two or three leaves torn out of a book and pasted in, from which he has designed to take an extract, an anecdote, or piece of history in illustration of his subject. But I think there is much that is curious, beautiful, and interesting. As fast as I can I shall write out my sketch of his life and criticism of his works, and send it to you all rude. I shall have a man in the next room to write out these manuscripts. I shall arrange them in the best manner I can, and send them to you.*

* * * * *

I send you my notes for John's life, to have my mind freed for a time of the oppressive subject. I have enough painful still in perusing these papers. Of these notes you will, of course, make what use you please—strengthen or blunt them—because you are as much interested as I am. Yet I do think it should be a good life. We may, dear George, have felt what others have not and should not. . . . . He did dunch

* John Bell's life was never published, for, on consultation together, the brothers decided that it was better to allow his works to speak for him, than to excite anew the controversies into which his enthusiasm for his profession had drawn him. That they judged wisely has been shown by the esteem in which his professional works are still held. His "Observations on Italy" were afterwards published by his widow.

and press one; but since I lived with him I have scarcely enjoyed what may be called conversation. In short, he was more than I have made him, and I feel so much as he felt that I think I have represented many things truly which might have been forgotten. It was always an *ex parte* evidence, and should be when we write the life of a friend. . . . .

The business of the Queen goes strangely on. How Brougham mounts higher and higher! God grant he may not fall into the Icarian Sea! I like him. Marion is diverted by my liking of him. Farewell.

1821.

1st January, 1821.

A good new year to you, Do!

Your little B—— is a great pet. Hitherto we have borne the bitter, bitter blasts on the top of Hampstead Hill very well. Marion has been much the better of it.

Do you take a look of my very handsome book, "The Illustrations of Surgery"? The truth is, I have never seen it myself; but it is doing well, and will be a class book. I was sitting yesterday betwixt Jeffrey and Moncrieff in a pleasant mood after dinner, and I was gratified by praise of your "Commentaries,"* of no ordinary kind. Jeffrey said it was an extraordinary book, full of admir-

* "Commentaries on the Laws of Scotland," still one of the standard law books of Scotland.

able good sense and ingenious views, and rich above belief in authorities. He continued, "I to-day introduced Brown to Shepherd (the Chief Baron of Scotland), and said 'the gentleman brings you a letter from Mr. Bell.' 'Mr. Bell!' says he; 'he can have no better recommendation. What an extraordinary book that is, Mr. Jeffrey; we have no book in the English law at all like it.'" Then came in Creeffie (Moncrieff), who said, with honest pleasure, "it was a most excellent book! John Clerk wants no other!" In short, it was settled between them that it was a sort of monster of perfection. They were far beyond fun—really impressive—which, you may imagine, was very agreeable to me.

*No date.**

This business of the nerves will be long of coming forward exactly as it should be, but my own ambition has a rest in this, that I have made a greater discovery than ever was made by any one man in anatomy, and the best of it, I am not done yet. I have just finished my paper on the nerves of the face for the Royal Society. I put it into Jeffrey's hands this morning, but he is very busy. . . . . I do not know what he may think of it; he is no man of science.

* Probably April, from the date, 6th April, marked on a copy, still existing, of his first paper to the Royal Society, corrected by Charles Bell himself, and other hands, and alluding to experiments made on the 16th of March.

13th July, 1821.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Last night my paper was read before the Royal Society.* . . . .

Sir E. Home has been made surgeon to Chelsea Hospital. Yesterday, in thanking the King, he said his Majesty should also know that without receiving this his old age would not have been comfortable. There, then, you see a great London surgeon—and nobody has carried himself so high—ending his life in acknowledged poverty, and going in a manner into an hospital at last.

(HAMPSTEAD) *7th August.*

I lead a curious life (at present), and one difficult to give an account of. We use the phaeton as much as the gypsies do their donkey-cart to go about the commons. Last week we went down to Box Hill in a delightful evening. We stopped at Charman's Inn,† had a roast "chuckie" to supper, and returned here in the morning. I made one fine sketch of some tangled wood, and put a boar and figures in the foreground.

Last night I read my paper on Expression, which I think you glanced at, to Richardson, Mrs. R., and Marion, and was pleased with the intense interest it produced.

* It was afterwards published in the Philosophical Transactions, and attracted immediate attention throughout Europe.

† Now better known as Burford Bridge.

FISHER DISENTANGLING HIS LINE.

From a Drawing by Sir Charles Bell, given to the late John Richardson, Esq. of Kirklands.

30*th August*, 1821.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

One day last week I went down with Richardson to fish in Panshanger, the seat of Lord Cowper,* where there is a pretty brawling river. Besides a "glorious nibble," I had *one*, saw his shoulder fairly out of the water, but thought it a pity to draw him quite out! However, we had a *dish of fish* to dinner, and I remain most devotedly a lover of the rod. When Marion comes back from Warley, I shall take her down into Kent, and then I project catching a great many excellent fish.

I give you no public news, because there is nothing pleasant. These popular commotions will in all likelihood continue. The advisers of his Majesty seem to have lost their senses to contrive such a contrast as exhibits something like a man laughing with one side of his face and crying with the other.

John Shaw is off to Paris,† and Richardson comes to dine toe to toe with me.

Your affectionate

C. B.

* This was the commencement of his love of fishing, which afterwards became almost a passion, and continued so throughout his life.

† During this visit, he explained to several distinguished medical savans the new method of investigating the functions of the nervous system, which had been introduced by Charles Bell, namely, that of examining the nerves where they come off directly from the columns of the brain or spinal cord, and before they unite with others and become complicated in structure. He likewise showed them the experiments on the two great nerves of the face, by which, along

November, 1821.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I think you must find my paper on the nerves well written? Richardson and others say it is. I send you some letters * I have received on this occasion; they will serve to convince you I am not a visionary on this subject. But I know better than others can tell me what is to become of this. It gives me a power of doing what I choose now, and will hereafter put me beside Harvey—*but this is in your ear.* Harvey was said to have had the way prepared for him so that he could not miss it—so fools argue. But the discoverer of the nervous system had nobody to go before him. The discoveries of anatomists had only made the matter more intricate and abstruse.

24th November, 1821.

DEAR GEORGE,

Poor Wilson died on Thursday, suddenly falling from his chair. The class is therefore interrupted for a few days. . . .

with others, the important physiological fact had been demonstrated —that in correspondence with the distinctions in their origins, the nerves of motion are distinct from those of sensation.

* Among these are letters from Sir H. Halford, Abernethy, and Dr. Gooch. Abernethy writes—"Having read it, I said to myself, 'What stupid chaps we have all been not to think of this before!!'" Sir H. Halford congratulates him on having opened a field of knowledge to the profession at large, and of fame to himself; and Dr. Gooch says, "The principle that when an organ performs several functions, it has nerves from several sources, so regularly that by knowing the one you may infer the other, is very striking, and to me quite new."

It will bring my fortune to a sort of crisis. I foresee a good deal of trouble, and yet not of the kind you apprehend. . . . . In the meantime, I am acting wisely and generously in respect to Wilson's memory.

30th.

I have been at poor Wilson's funeral.

* * * * *

Baillie told me that the family were much pleased with what I said to the class. . . . .

C. B.

CHAPTER XV.

Royal Society Papers—Certificate of his Birth—Fishing in Scotland—George Bell's First Lecture—Squinting—Second Edition of "The Anatomy of Expression"—George Bell's Serious Illness—The President's Promise—Appointed Professor to the College of Surgeons—Vindication of Fishing—The "New College"—College of Surgeons Lectures—Sending part of his Museum to Edinburgh.

1822 TO 1825.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

1st February, 1822.

Last week I went to Sir Humphrey Davy's meeting, and there I found my paper had done me as much good as if I had bought a new blue coat, and figured French black silk waistcoat. Loch, who was with me, showed his good nature by the pleasure the civil things that were said to me gave him. He laughed heartily at my pretensions to modesty. In short, one gentleman, not the least important in that fraternity, called it the first discovery of the age; and Sir Humphrey Davy made me promise to give them more—so, I forgot to say I am making dissections for the purpose at present.

4th.

Last Thursday my paper was concluded in the Royal Society. I met the president and some of

the members in the evening, and learned that the impression was everything I could wish. I was a little startled by one goose saying it was highly poetical, for when a thing is out of my hand it is unfortunately out of my head.

Yours, C. B.

10th June, 1822.

My discoveries have made more impression in France than here, and I have received a second message from Majendie, saying that if I would send them any short account, I should have the prize-medal. This is a ridiculous thing for an old fellow.

1st July.

Before I speak nonsense, will you do me the favour of sending me a certificate of my age? Do this in a business manner, as I wish to have it for various reasons. At present I require an authentic and proper certificate—if possible, by return of post.*

I should be writing a third paper on the Nerves, but I cannot proceed without making some experiments, which are so unpleasant to make that I defer them. You may think me silly, but I cannot perfectly convince myself that I am authorised in nature, or religion, to do these cruelties—for what?—for anything else than a little egotism

* At this time there was no registration of births in Scotland, and Charles wrote to his wife to tell her that, having been called on by an insurance office to give his age, he had to write to ask George what it was, as from his own process of addition and subtraction, he made out that he was 149 years old!

or self-aggrandisement; and yet, what are my experiments in comparison with those which are daily done? and are done daily for nothing. So my employment is, correcting the press of my new edition of the Anatomy, and writing notes for my Physiology, which I mean to make an additional volume to the Anatomy.

You must understand that in coming to Scotland I have to obtain such refreshment as may serve me for a whole year of privation. You have no idea of the weariness which comes on a man of original right ways of thinking, from protracted years of imprisonment in London; the tedium that comes over him, the sort of despair of change and entire lack of relaxation and pleasure. A day or two by a fresh water-side—a long walk or ride in agreeable scenery—a day of "*daffing*" with friends whose abilities are good as well as their hearts, is something to dwell upon and remember; and according as a man is blest with imagination, he can dress these encounters up so as to satisfy and deceive himself; but last evening was such a day in such a scene as might reconcile even a Scotchman to return here. I sat upon a sunny bank, overlooking Harrow and the west of Middlesex, than which there can be no lovelier scene. But my time for landscape painting is not yet come. *Da Capo!* Mind what I say in the first sentence here.

Yours, C. B.

17*th July*, 1822.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Contrive it so that I may pass some cool day with you at your little place, and I am indifferent about the rest. While at Ayr it will be my chief object to keep among woods and waters.

* * * * *

I wrote to Marion that I had made a discovery. The whole difficulty about the muscles and nerves of the eye was removed by a flash one night in bed. I bolted up in my bed and rubbed my eyes, and prayed that I was not dreaming, and that I would recollect my views to-morrow. For these five days past I have thought of nothing else. I say to you, what I think you know, and I am convinced this will prove me to be—a very ingenious gentleman!

Yours, C. B.

Christmas Evening, 1822.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I fear these lectures * will quite interrupt our correspondence. When I turn to this duty the same class of ideas rush upon me, and I believe my letters must consist of the same thing a hundred times repeated. But we should be very thankful for this. It is misfortune and unhappiness that make business letters. Heaven be praised, we have little else to do than to sympathise in each other's good fortune! I have not much to boast of, but in the calm way of domestic

* George Bell's lectures on the Law of Scotland in the University of Edinburgh.

life as little disturbed by hopes or fears as most folks.

I long to hear of your lectures. You will now have experienced that it is not all pleasant, that we are apt to rate the merit of young men too high; to attempt doing too much for them, and occasionally to feel disappointed in attempting to fill bottles above the brim. On the other hand, indifference is a painful state; and so perhaps, like me, you will be at one time finding everything but lecturing stale and troublesome, at another the regularity and sameness of it a great plague, an exhausting, stupifying thing. I have taken a vacation of a few days, and mean to write out my paper on the Eye: it has occupied my mind very much and long.

Yours, C. B.

1823.

16th January, 1823.

Dear George,

While waiting for a patient, I sit down to scribble a little. A few weeks will bring us Spring;—in five days I begin my *Spring Course!* The time has sped quickly, owing to the stock of fresh ideas I got by my journey to Scotland. I am far advanced in my paper on the Eye, which I think you will like as my happiest effort. I have never in any interval of ease ceased to think of it, since we stood together on the top of the hill; but it will be short, notwithstanding, and full of curious observations.

Among other speculations connected with my present studies, I think I have made out that squinting depends on the over-action of one of the oblique muscles, and that it may be cured by an operation. I am looking out for a patient to try this upon,* which, if it succeed, will be a great matter, as a conclusion drawn from my investigations.

11th February.

I have nearly finished my paper. The subject which has kept me so long engaged is the action of the muscles in squinting. I have brought that to the most curious conclusion, by showing that the position of the eyeball when at rest is that of squinting, and that squinting is, in fact, the eye going to sleep! in neglect of expression.

C. B.

5th April.

My dear George,

There was a letter in the "Morning Herald" giving an account of a conversation in a stage-coach in the south of France, which the Tourist sent home, believing the news could not have reached England of certain astonishing experiments on the nerves, performed in Paris by Majendie—*mine, viz.*† We wrote to the editor.

* In his wife's Journal, January, 1823, is the entry: "Bought a monkey for squinting operations." In his "Essay on Squinting," (re-published in his "Practical Essays,") Charles Bell gives an account of the operations. They were similar to those afterwards (in 1835) attributed to Dieffenbach, and this cure for squinting now goes by his name.

† See note to November, 1821.

A young pupil applied to have my papers for the purpose of writing an account of my discoveries to the "Literary Gazette." This determined me to anticipate him, by sending the paper you saw in Scotland.

I have made some new observations on the Eye. But I have done, and must attend to practice. My Expression is printing.

Yours, C. B.

8th December, 1823.

DEAR GEORGE,

This dedication to you of the Anatomy of Expression * has cost me more trouble than the book, and now they have clipped it and smoothed it, so that neither sentiment nor good writing remain. Instead of a handsome natural branch or wreath at the top of my pages, it has been cropped into the form of a vulgar line-hedge, a round, formal thing, offering no enticement to enter the premises. I have done with (the) letter-press. It has been eight or nine months printing, but the engravings continue to give me great

* The second edition of the "Anatomy of Expression," published early in 1824, was dedicated—"To George Joseph Bell, Esq., Advocate, Professor of the Law of Scotland in the University of Edinburgh. The reprinting of this volume recalls the time when it was written, when we studied together before the serious pursuits of life were begun. I inscribe it to you as the first object of my pride, as well as of my affection, and that those most naturally interested in us may know how we have been united, so that from the age when they begin to wonder at the strange faces in their uncle's book, they may learn how much brotherly attachment adds to the value of life. CHARLES BELL."

trouble. I send out a laughing boy, and he comes back crying.

I have an anxious operation on my spirits to-night. You'll be asking me about the Nerves? I am waiting to see what others may do for me. I have lectured them lately with great effect. You may send for the "Medical Journal"—the last number of the yellow book—if you please, where you will find some strictures in my favour, and against the French. They, you know, have accused me of taking from them!

* * * * *

28th.

I have had a most miserable time since I wrote to you, from the failure of an operation, and the death of a most worthy man. I shall regret it as long as I live. It is very hard, more trying than anything that any other profession can bring a man to.

We are all well.

Ever affectionately Yours,

C. B.

1824.

20th February, 1824.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You have, indeed, communicated great alarm to us, but I am inclined to take the view you have presented to us; and, also, as to what has been the cause of your illness.

I have vexed myself constantly of late with the idea of your continual labour. Now, the fact

is, it will not do; and you may as well give out at once that you have been over-tasked, and broken down in harness.

Do not fail to make this impression, which is but too true, and take time to recruit and to do yourself justice. No man can do so who attempts to do so much as you do. My hope is, that, having been seriously threatened, you may make a resolution of more careful and moderate labour. If I have not good accounts, I shall come down.

I feel very thankful to the President for what he has said, and in fact done, for it must have had a very consolatory effect on you in your present reduced state. In the meantime, do you take care of yourself, and fail not to let the truth be known that, with all these things, you have been over-wrought. I hope in God you will never have another opportunity of enforcing it.

C. B.

The incident alluded to in the last letter was this:—In the end of the previous year George had been appointed one of the Honorary Royal Commissioners to reform the Law of Scotland, and was unanimously chosen by his colleagues to draw up the report of their labours. This, together with his large practice, his daily lectures on the Law of Scotland, and the writing of legal works of great importance—all carried on at the same time—was too much for even his gigantic powers of work, and brought on a serious illness. When

this was known, the President of the Court told him to give himself no anxiety about his profession, as he had sent in his name for promotion to the Bench on the first vacancy; and that, as to his family, they should be the public care. The encouragement given by these promises was infinitely valuable; but when the time came for their fulfilment, they were forgotten.

A few months after his recovery, George was summoned to London by Sir R. Peel, then Home Secretary, to prepare and superintend the passing through Committee, in the House of Lords, of the Scottish Judicature Act. It was a duty he gladly undertook; and bringing his lectures to a hasty conclusion, he went to London in the beginning of April. His reception there by the great legal authorities was gratifying to himself and to his friends. At the close of his labours on the Bill, he was called before the Committee of the House of Lords, and formally thanked, while, at the same time, he was requested to remain in town to see the Bill through its various stages. This Bill brought him into constant communication on legal matters with the Chancellor, Sir S. Romilly, Lords Lauderdale, Melville, Gifford, &c., &c., and he was distinctly led to expect immediate promotion to the Bench. But these expectations were never fulfilled.

22nd July, 1824.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Yesterday I had a sort of communication from the College of Surgeons, implying that, if I would say I would not refuse, I should be appointed to the Professorship of Anatomy and Surgery. . . . . You know there are two Professorships—one of Physiology, the other of Anatomy and Surgery. To the latter, the older members have been appointed, in the succession of *Sir Wm. Blizzard*, *Abernethy*, *Wilson*, and *Chevalier*. So far, you see, I have no reason to complain, as these are my seniors, and men of the Court of Assistants, as it is called. No one can say I have courted for the appointment. You naturally say, What advantage comes of this? It is the only distinction the profession can bestow. Good, if we can make good out of it; and bad, if we cannot fill it.

28th.

Lynn has just called to declare my appointment to the Professorship, so that is settled.

* * * * *

I think we shall set off about the 15th for the north. In the meantime, I hope I have done everything for success in the ensuing winter; and certainly I shall return with unusual expectations. I have prepared my Nerves, and a good deal for my lectures. You must remember that I have

also, in this vacation, published two lectures; and you will conclude, with all my idleness, I have not been idle.

Yesterday and to-day I have been returning thanks to my College electors;—that is a fine field open.

I must vindicate my fishing to you, for to long for increase of business is to long for increase of torture. I must do an operation to-morrow, which makes me to-day quite miserable; and so it is that in looking to increase of reputation and business, I have not only the conviction that great blockheads have enjoyed this before me, but that I am providing for a relay and continual supply of suffering. Then, again, I am confined here to brick walls and dusty streets; if I make an effort, I cannot, with all my diligence, get out of the noise of wheels. If some miles from town I accidentally stand still, I feel what, perhaps, for months I have not perceived—the absence of din; and when I feel the fresh breeze, see the clouds high overhead, and the fresh verdure around us, I naturally exclaim, "What have I got in exchange for this?" My philosophy tells me that to study to be happy we must study to be natural, to take what God has sent us, has liberally supplied, with appetite to enjoy it. Yet to enjoy the country it is not merely necessary to live in it. The citizen goes down with high enjoyment; for a time he is as frisky as a dog let out to snuff and run in the open fields. But after a turn or two

he begins to pull out his watch to wish for dinner, to be weary of looking about him, and he finds that the change he has attempted is absurd and unnatural to his habits. Is it not something to provide against this humiliating and painful confession of the poor artificial creature, man? Therefore, I say, have some pastime—and this is mine! How delightful it is to find yourself, in a spring day, by the side of a stream in the midst of a meadow, the fine sloping hills around you, with their drooping trees and broken woods, with your tackle and rod preparing. Look around you, enjoy the solitude, the loveliness of nature; for when once begun, the interest is too intense; you wish for rain, for wind, for then the trouts rise freely; but there is a sort of inward sense and consciousness of where you are, that you breathe a pure air, and are fatigued without being exhausted, without lassitude, and you see the day rise, and you see it in full noon, and you see it decline, and it is all too short,—hours and days speed away all too rapidly for enjoyment.

Then if you enjoy a wilder scene—trees, rocks, and torrents—how delightful to stand in the very middle of the stream. A cloud passes over the sun, and suddenly the bright waters take a frowning darkness. And then is the time—you feel the jerk at your elbow, which none but a fisher can speak of. But that varying darkness of the brown rushing waters, the pools, the rocks, the fantastic trees—go round the world, you shall not

see *these* unless you have a fishing-rod in your hand; then you are led to scenes that will even break the eagerness of your pursuit, and make you pause in admiration.

With all this of nature, there is an additional charm in a very little matter. *Man*, I am convinced, enjoys the work of his hands, the adjustment of his tackle, the neatness, fitness, and nicety of the whole apparatus; the study of the flies upon the water as well as those in *your book*, the judgment displayed in the adaptation of rod, and line, and fly, and wind, and rain, and fish, and morning, and mid-day, and evening, forms exactly that gentle exercise of the talents that suits recreation.

Yours, C. B.

1825.

16*th March*, 1825.

My dear George,

I have nothing to tell you, except that I began my lectures at the College of Surgeons yesterday. I confess I have been very anxious about them. The thing went off well, yet I did not satisfy myself. . . . . You stand in a very awkward situation—500 people, stretching upwards, bolt before you, and nothing beside or around you. I found the Theatre crowded to suffocation. I felt great embarrassment which, as I appeared to speak easily, was attributed rather to art than to feeling the newness of my situation. But, indeed, he must have more confidence in himself than I

possess who could, without some misgiving, address the united profession.

In the front row are the old tried stagers, among whom are our best lecturers—Cline, Abernethy, Cooper; behind the first row are our young physicians from the University, as visitors; the body of the Theatre is occupied by the practitioners of London, and the upper benches and galleries are kept for the Hospital students—in all 500.

I began with some compliments to the College, putting them as it were aside to be my judges, not my audience, and addressed myself to the younger men, the most removed class of my hearers, assuming, as much as I could, my natural and forcible manner in speaking to my own class. That I did this badly I learn from this circumstance, that my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. No man can speak naturally—without which there can be no eloquence—if his mouth is dry with anxiety or apprehension; he may say what was in his mind to deliver, but he cannot bend and adapt himself to his subject and to the condition of his audience.

Lots of compliments from the old gents.

C. B.

3rd April, 1825.

My dear George,

This is the first day in which we have had a long drive, and the country looked very pleasant, altho' there be no green on the hedgerows yet.

It was solitary, as if people had not discovered that the winter had passed.

As to my College affair, it goes on to your heart's content. There never was anything like the packing and crowding of the Theatre, and yesterday they say as many went away as got admission, and there they sit from three, when the doors open, till four. Then the President and Court enter with the great man, and take their seats, and lastly your old friend with his black silk gown and crimson lining. I wonder how I have the impudence, and I have, to take them one by one and scan them over to reduce them to proportionate size and importance. In short the thing takes mightily.

I have now given five lectures at the College, and the squeeze and interest to get in is beyond all example. The old men are evidently much pleased with the consequence attained through these lectures. I am now lecturing my *Nerves*. On Saturday I shall conclude. I think it is my manner of lecturing that takes; *vivâ voce*, and working the thing out in a natural way, with occasional force and occasional failure, keep them awake.

9th April.

I dined with the College of Surgeons last night. I am fanciful, and do think it strange that I should be among them with their good cheer and old London habits. Our President served, I believe,

with the Barber-Surgeons. However, there are two or three of them above eighty.

C. B.

* * * * *

I have just written a letter closing with the proposal of the Edinburgh College of Surgeons to purchase my Windmill Street museum, and as I suppose there is now no doubt of the affair going on, I shall begin—if not tooth and nail, at any rate very seriously, to commence a new one.*

C. BELL TO HIS WIFE.

30th October, 1825. (Saturday, at e'en.)

I have just come in from Hampstead, admiring all the way the man in the moon, and thinking it hard not to see my Marion when I come home. Richardson came in at breakfast, *more solito*, in his old way, you know, and engaged me to go out. I intended to be in time to study, but it is too late,—and is this writing a letter? Yes, for it tells my better half how like one day is to another, and that she must come up to mark each day and hour with something like feeling, consciousness, or enjoyment; that without her is a long————blank. What pulls on me!—Something in a corner yet tho', for a body I like—aye, or a thing I have a fancy to. To-

* The agreement was carried out, and Charles Bell's Museum transported to Edinburgh, where it is placed in the fine Hall erected by the College there.

morrow morning I shall give ten guineas for a skull—but it is an elephant's.

Here is your letter telling me that you are off for Edinburgh. This is a great pleasure, and the sun breaks in upon me. Now bestir yourself, and plan your journey up.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sir A. Carlyle's Hunterian Oration—Fishing in Wales—Animal Mechanics—John Shaw's Death—Canning's Death—Charter desired for the London University—Second Part of Animal Mechanics—Dining at Horne's—John Murray's—Meeting of the Professors of the London University—His First Salmon—Dalquharran—Edinburgh.

1826 TO 1830.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

9th January, 1826.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have written a new paper, *i.e.*, on a new part of my subject, to the Royal Society. It explains a piece of the anatomy hitherto obscure. It shows that two nerves are necessary to a muscle—one to excite action, the other to convey the sense of that action, and that the impression runs only in one direction, *e.g.*, the nerve that carries the will outward can receive no impression from without; the nerve that conveys inward a sense of the condition of the muscle cannot convey outward; that there must be a circle established betwixt the brain and a muscle. This has, of course, much delighted me, and has engaged me in the evenings.

As to the Hunterian oration, I know not what is to become of it. It is given in regular succession by the Seniors of the College. To-day, Sir Antony Carlyle delivered it. I heard him at the public dinner of the Hospital boast what he would do. I saw the moment I entered that he would fail—that he had miscalculated the subject, and the time, and the audience. He had a large volume of manuscript before him; he was surrounded by a quantity of preparations suited to a course of lectures rather than to one discourse; and he had as many shell-fish on the table before him as you see in an oyster shop, and had the folly or the wit to make the *oyster* the subject of the Hunterian oration. He began with a supercilious confidence, and, after many interruptions, finally broke down, after an hour and a quarter's delivery, amid the noise and hisses of the audience. This was a fearful lesson to a lecturer.

* * * * *

C. B.

16*th February*, 1826.

DEAR GEORGE,

My paper will be read in the Royal Society on Thursday. I dined with Sir Humphry and Lady Davy yesterday. Great complaints of the want of patronage for science, and the utter inattention of Government to it! The first news I found at home was that Dr. H—— had got 3000*l.* and a pension for his daughter.

I have had operations both at the Hospital and in private, from which I suffer indescribable anxiety, so that I vote my profession decidedly a bad one—the more to do, the worse.

SHREWSBURY, *8th September*, 1826.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

We are here on our way out of Wales, where we have enjoyed ourselves—as driving, sketching, and fishing have not left me a moment in idleness. But do not expect a comfortable or descriptive letter. I have made my quarters good in an excellent family, and they are all about me. Wales made me think much of Scotland. I do not mean by comparison, but by association. In Wales the beauties of our native country are concentrated, and there are no long days' journeys betwixt the bright spots. Fish there are none; sketches I have a few, and I mean to send them down with Marion's journal, for the diversion of my young friends and old. Marion, I think, has enjoyed these two weeks.

By-the-bye, on entering Wales I got your letter, telling me of your appointment to a new Commission. This I knew would be acceptable to you, and it gave me so much pleasure, that I went off hop, step, and jump, round Snowdon in great spirits; for indeed, my dear George, good or bad fortune must reach me through you or my own Marion. For myself, I do not care for the world's gear.

Yours, C. B.

1827.

19th January, 1827.

DEAR GEORGE,

I believe I told you that I was assisting Brougham. That indefatigable fellow is to write the article "Hydraulics" for the library of the Society, which you call "a new society for mechanics;" but I beg you to understand that I do not consider it in that light at all. It is more intended for the rich than the hammermen. Brougham has also written the introductory discourse, and all the correspondence goes through him. I have written an essay on the architecture of the head,* which has put Marion and me on the study of things we little dreamed of.

Yours, C. B.

24th May, 1827.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

We had a dinner of 470 at the Freemasons' Tavern on laying the foundation of the London University. The ceremony was, I suppose, common, but very pretty. The dinner brought 8000*l.*, and the progress of the work will bring in subscriptions fast.

* This treatise was afterwards published among the papers of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, under the title of "Animal Mechanics"; and in August, 1827, Brougham writes to C. Bell from Lancaster:—"I cannot refrain from telling you the prodigious success your admirable treatise has among us on this circuit—judges, lawyers, wranglers, metaphysicians, and theologians, men who are devoid of science, saint, savage, and sage, all unite in its praise, and in gratitude to you. But should not the subject have a second handling? H. BROUGHAM."

Brougham was exceedingly good. It was most like Charles Mathews' representation of Curran—grave and seceder-like, first sawing with one hand, and then the other, and generally holding out his two fists straight before him. He delivers himself in a measured, slow, continuous flow of words, and excels in sarcasm. His description of a man sneering at the University, and continuing the joke when the laugh was (to him unconscious) altogether at him and not with him, was felicitous, and made the fat fellows roar again. As for the rest of them, their style of oratory put into my head men turned from dogs, who barked when they should speak—the sound or drone of their voice generally confounding the articulate sounds.

* * * * *

I am in *statu quo ante bellum* with the University. They have deferred their appointments for a month.

5th June.

I have been sorting my letters. What bundles of yours. We have certainly contrived to live with and for each other as much as any two brothers. Your Charlie * is very cheerful, active, and obliging. He likes to be doing with his hands, and all I have to do is to keep his head at work. I am still in the dark as to the University. My present occupation at intervals is new-model-

* G. J. Bell's eldest son, then studying under his uncle for the medical profession.

ling my System of Surgery. There is great room for the influence of good sense in a work of this kind.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ.

21st July, 1827.

MY DEAR JOHN,

I have lost my dear and best friend, John Shaw. I thought I could have stood it better. There is such a blank, I have not an idea left. He was the happiest creature in his death, laughing to see my exertions to relieve him. The husk of his cold manner had been thrown off since he was carried out of town, and he was the sweetest fellow, planning, like you, enjoyment and pleasure and surprise for his friends.

Yet, after all, I was not with him. . . . . I had been with him, but had come to town to get some medicine, and on return saw his poor brother * on the road. He had gone off in a moment.

God bless you, my dear John.

Yours, C. B.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ.

August, 1827.

MY DEAR JOHN,

I shall not write to you about our loss and suf-

* Alexander Shaw, then at Cambridge, studying for his degree as M.D. This he relinquished, on his brother's death, to take his place with Charles Bell, to whom he was ever the most devoted of friends.

ferings. My brother being here dissipates our thoughts to make the conviction, I think, more intolerable.*

But write to me what you are about, and if you have made any enquiries as to land to be sold, and with what result. My purpose is every hour more confirmed to have my cottage on the banks of some of the rivers. I should like to be directed by your *locating*, but I rest in the hope that we shall be in the same country-side.

I wrote this some days ago; it will now go by my brother. I have persuaded him to go off, notwithstanding Canning's death. What a world it is! Poor Canning has been lost by his own folly. May I not say so? The surgeon he called in prescribed calomel. When he last visited the King he was holding his handkerchief to his mouth. "What is the matter?" says Sir Wm. Knighton. He said he was salivated. Knighton found him very ill, forced him to go home and to call his physician. They found inflammation of the chest far advanced, ordered him to be bled, but the neglect, loss of time, and the shattered constitution made it impossible to follow that course of practice which is necessary in inflamed lungs, and thus such a man was permitted to perish of a disease over which the physician ought to have the control more than over any other.

* John Shaw died on the 19th of July, and, as soon as the news reached Edinburgh, George set off for London, knowing how strongly the loss would affect Charles.

I shall have no heart to cast a line until I am with you. Without a companion I fear it would not do. However, I must take my poor wife out of town now and then. Write to me about your flock, and believe me ever,

Affectionately yours,

C. BELL.

1828.

2nd January, 1828.

A good new year to you my dear George, and all the little ones, and my dear B——. We are well; your children here strong, and I hope happy.

We make no very decided progress in the University. I am thinking of taking the physiology and the clinical surgery. I have my choice. . . . They are the courses which I know will be most generally interesting—the one elegant—touching on whatever I choose—the other interesting to all ages. What do you say to this?

You may perceive in a new weekly, "Medical Gazette," Nos. 2 and 4, my clinical lectures taken; tell me how they strike you, and suggest anything. This is a thing we must support. You will not be surprised to find a paper of mine in the next number, since it is a feeling with the more eminent and respectable of the profession that it is meritorious to give it countenance and assistance.

There is a plan of uniting the University and

the Middlesex Hospital. I have calmly looked to this as the only thing they can do: and who do you think are now at the bottom of the plot—of all the fowls in the air—but Joseph Hume and C. Bell, Esq.! An hospital is necessary for our curriculum.

C. B.

24th June, 1828.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I have positively nothing new, only my spirits have been bad—not owing to anything, but to nothing—a want of object, and a consequence of the stupid dulness of practice, which dissipates the mind, keeping it in a condition neither of rest nor of vigorous inquiry.

Tuesday.

I am going off for at least two days. I have avoided seeing any of the University people, and mean to keep myself to this: "Procure us a charter, and a power of giving degrees. Do this and success attends us; fail in this, and the fault is not in us the professors." My determination is not to enter the walls as a professor until this be done . . . . it is the *sine quâ non*, it is necessary to general success—it is necessary to enable me to do good.

If it be said, "Why did you not say so before?" I answer, "it has been my note from the beginning;" while you said "wait till things are in train." And now they are. And moreover, circumstances are completely changed. Whether

you are in fault or the Government, or the Whigs or the Tories, demand justice of the King, or throw the blame of defeat from off your men of science or literature. They at least are not to bear the burden.*

All well; good-bye.

C. BELL.

26th August, 1828.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

It seems I begin—lead off this same grand University. I shall probably prepare my lecture by the Usk or Fowey as I lash the stream. But to make sure of a good mouthful at first, I have written a few pages which I shall send to you, as I think just at the beginning it will be more respectful to give them ten minutes' reading.

September.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Look with a critical eye all over this, and let me beg of you to lose no time in correcting and returning it. You will at once perceive the delicate ground on which I stand. But by their advertisement they say, "A general lecture introductory to the school," which puts me at once upon my subject, and excuses what might otherwise

* The above letter will show that there were serious difficulties in establishing the new University, but it is too old a story now to go back upon, except where it actually tells on Charles Bell's private fortunes. It is enough that he was persuaded most reluctantly, and against his better judgment, not only to accept a Professorship in the University, but to give the opening lecture.

be too bold. Any story or illustration thankfully received. Correct what I say of courts of law.*

Having delivered this, I shall extempore advance to my own matters, and show how I mean to prosecute my particular department; then give an example in a short history of the human voice, and return to some claptrap of a sentence in concluding.

C. B.

1829.

16*th February*, 1829.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I wish this "Animal Mechanics" † had been yours, or that you had tried something a little out of your profession. I shall receive a vast accession of praise for this thing. I judge from the notes made on it by the *Committee of publication*, some of them men high at Cambridge. Peacock, Fellow of Trinity College, writes on the margin:—"I have read few things lately with greater interest than this and the following chapter; they are equally admirable for wise principles and correct and vigorous reasoning, and for clear and animated language."

This is all one can attain by such an essay; and I am not displeased that I have been drawn in to compose, piece by piece, such a production.

* To open the general school required allusions to other sciences than his own, and he sent to his brother so much of his rough draft as he proposed reading, meaning to conclude in his usual way with an address to the medical students, the reference notes for which were expressed by little hieroglyphic sketches.

† The second part was just published.

When I can get an evening—for I am kept busy with one thing and another—I like a *book;* —it is so calm after so many different occupations. I have just been reading Lord J. Russell's history, which has the advantage of being pure in principle, the dictates of a well-balanced mind.

Yours, C. B.

8th July.

My dear George,

Do you suppose that a day's amusement can keep me in health in this hateful and unnatural state of existence? I often go a fishing, and without it I know I could not exist. The first day I took this season made a revolution in my system,—for, before that, I thought myself ill. I wish, therefore, you had some such pastime. I went about becoming a fisherman rationally, and on principle; but it is no longer rational, but a passion, for the enjoyment of which I would sacrifice a great deal.

I am just going to dine with Horne, the Chancery Barrister. I have known him hitherto, only, with his head out of a blanket. Next Sunday I dine with Lord Lansdowne. On Friday we dined at John Murray's, Albemarle Street. A large party of wits assembled there, among others, Tom Moore. I felt as if I had been gazing all night at sky-rockets.*

* There were present Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart, Dr. and Mrs. Somerville, Sir Martin Shee—who led on Moore—Washington Irving, Wilkie, Mr. and Mrs. Murray, and ourselves. The talk was of wit, and Moore gave specimens. He sang "Ship, ahoy!" Washington

25th.

I am trying to be very busy, so as to "win to you." I am finishing my Nervous System in 4to, with plates, dedicated to the King. In the University they have formed themselves into a faculty of the medical professors, and have made me their head, but are at a loss what to call me.

We shall have no commencement as last year, but I have pleasant labours before me, and I shall return to London with more satisfaction than I have felt on former occasions.

* * * * *

There was a meeting of our professors here yesterday. I had them all to dinner, &c. They have come to the resolution of again requesting me to commence the medical school by a general lecture. This I did not expect, but it will now be my *painful duty*, and make it part of our day's work, as we travel together, to compose this said oration. The introductory lecture of last year, which gave so much satisfaction, as B. must have told you, was composed whilst fishing in Wales, and dictated in Aberystwith to the applauding hands of my wife and your daughter. Mind the fishing-rod!

Yours, C. BELL.

Irving gave traits of Wilkie's simplicity in Madrid. At a fancy ball, Wilkie, as a Turk, wore his turban as a *chapeau bras*, and had a band of crape on his arm, "in mourning for an old lady, a cousin, who had died in Fife." Charles thought that our host, Murray, said the best things that brilliant night.—*Lady Bell's Memoranda.*

CHARLES BELL TO HIS WIFE AT BATH.

PENNINGHAM, GALLOWAY,
CAPT. HOUSTON STEWART'S.
16*th August*, 1829.

. . . . I have put no sweet words, because I write in the drawing-room. . . . .

But that I have gone so far astray from my original intention to be much with dear George, this has been a pleasant journey. You cannot conceive the attention and friendly interest in our follies, of this family, remarkable for the warmest affection to one another.

Yesterday was our great day, for Friday was, as usual, a disappointment. Captain Stewart came down the water, saying—"Well! we have hooked him and landed him." Richardson had killed a salmon!!! This put me to my mettle, and I set to work in good earnest. At that moment I saw the beautiful sight of a salmon rising from a fine pool. I threw further than I ever threw before—he rose at my fly, and I struck him in a style that caused universal approbation. I held him for half-an-hour, and landed him in a little nook of a rock.

I should tell you that as soon as R—— struck his fish, his first exclamation was for similar success to me; and all through, the greatest fun prevailed,—Houston Stewart delighted beyond measure with our success, and roaring with laughter, and running from one to the other. We each killed a second salmon, and this, con-

trary to the expectation of the knowing ones in these parts, in a north-east wind, and the river not in order.

But—the fatigue! for we were far up in the hills, and had to walk down to the car. At dinner—a party—the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Garlies, and Lord Fincastle, and Lady Stewart, and the young ladies, and a nephew of Lord Galloway's. We were very merry. H. Stewart proposed a bumper to the two gentlemen who had that day killed their first salmon. In return, I said that we two had travelled and had fished in the north, and in the west, in the south, and the south-west—the autumns of four long years—and all in vain; and now I perceived why we had not succeeded in our hearts' wish of killing a salmon:—we had not till now found ourselves under the direction of a true brother of the angle, who, tho' the most eager fisher himself, could prefer the enjoyment of his guests to the display of his own expertness: with which, Richardson cheered up with "Success to the Professor!!"

The issue is, that since we determined to go, we are to attend the Lord-Lieutenant to-morrow at four in the morning—for so pleased are they all with our enjoyment of this country and this sport, that the country is up to give us one day more in the highlands—with rods, and otter-hounds, to fish and hunt the Loch; and then make a run down the valleys to Lord Garlies' *to supper*. So that to-morrow is to be a great last day.

I hope I have laid in a store of curious descriptions and anecdotes for you.

C. B.

FROM CHARLES BELL TO HIS WIFE.

T. Kennedy's,
Dalquharran, Ayrshire.

Wednesday, 20*th August*, 1829.

* * * * *

Here I am, during one of the short intervals when I have dry clothes on and play the gentleman. . . . . I am better and more capable of exercise, as I ascertained just now in coming up to this house from a walk in the driving rain —six miles down the water, and where, this time two years ago, I suffered so much. It was the first time I felt that pain in my stomach which has been now my plague for so long. I hope that this sort of life may serve to remove it, and that the success of the mode of cure may be an apology for the life we have led. The toil, and the wild discomfort that I have undergone for successive days, will fit me for enjoying the comfort of our drawing-room, and of sitting by you. By the bye, I don't recollect ever to have tired of that!

Edinburgh, 21*st*.

I think I wrote last from my miserable inn in Glasgow, while waiting for the mail. I was carried by it, and after a long sleep, set down in Princes Street at three o'clock in the morning. There I stood, after the coach had passed on—the old town and Arthur Seat dimly seen—and

I began to think I had lived long enough to have seen what I have seen, and be as now. I got here without waking the family, and they found me snug in bed at breakfast-time!

This is a family of fine creatures, the most orderly and best behaved that I have seen. This morning I went to church with the whole flock before me in precise order. George is in good health—harassed about his circumstances, but in other respects, I would say happily situated. I am pleased to think he is in honour with the Profession, and has been useful to them.

I have been here these four days *incog.*, but . . . . I must now run the gauntlet or run the City. The waters are *out*, from heavy rains, or Charles Shaw and I would be to-morrow on the Tweed. Since I *cauched* the salmon I am calm and sedate on that head, and rather prefer the snug fishing in a good preserve!

I am reading and making notes for my first lecture; and I shall be ready to dictate to my pet in terms that should command applause! *

I have much and little to say. You know my life in Edinburgh is one of sentiment in which nobody sympathises, and which you have too much good sense to hear me prate about. I have visited some of the old out-of-the-way holes, and shall more by and by. . . . .

C. B.

* After John Shaw's death, Mrs. Bell was her husband's amanuensis in all *non*-professional work.

CHAPTER XVII.

Disturbed Meeting—"Principles of the Law of Scotland"—Pike-trolling at Luton—Cuvier—"The Hand"—Paley—Close of his Connection with the London University—Elected into the Council of the College of Surgeons—Brougham and the Notes on Paley—Leonard Horner's Resignation of the Wardenship of the University—Panshanger—London during the Reform Bill Debate—Order of the Guelph—Scene at the Levée—Brook Street—Squinting at his Rod.

1830 TO 1832.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

6th February, 1830.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

A Saturday and some leisure gives you this. The season is most severe; the cold intense; the mercury at 10°.

1st March.

We had rather a disturbed meeting of proprietors in the University. I did not speak; I uttered only one emphatic sentence, which Dr. T. took upon himself to agree with and to paraphrase in a manner the other professors did not like—hence the letter you may see in the "Times." I have said to the Council they must stop all this, nor allow the professors to write about the University to the public, and through the public newspapers.

3rd April.

Last night I said I must sit down and write you, because I found my spirits unusually light. Just then I got a notice that one of my patients had altered very much for the worse in the last two hours, and so I was put again in the blue devils. I have been a good deal harassed by business, and by lectures, &c., but nothing after all that should entitle me to complain.

My book is out, as you will see by the newspapers. I was delighted in seeing it in its first garb, being the large copy, but it and my pride have come down in the common selling copies.

Cannot you go to the bookseller's and get a copy of my book? telling them to note it down to Longman's as from the author. It is the only one that I have given, except that which was begged for by a deputation of the Medical and Chirurgical Society. We have just received the king's copy, in purple and gold, from the binder. I am afraid that will long continue to be a balance against his majesty in our accounts.

I am greatly revived by my day's fishing; my legs stronger and my breathing better. My misery is continual watery eyes. I thought when I went I should not see the fish. Notwithstanding I never used my handkerchief, although at lecture I must touch my eyes every ten minutes, and in fact incontinently display my white handkerchief in an oratorical manner. If the enemy should advance

in this way, I must combat him the best way I can.

I am delighted with your substitute for little Erskine,* but I am a little jealous in favour of the great book.† However, you have got the field, God be praised, and the power of a cheap book is great. Most of all I am pleased with your account of the boys.

Yours, C. B.

7th May, 1830.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

My practice has certainly increased this season, and good time it should. About a week ago, on visiting the Duchess of Wellington, I found the tray coming in with her dinner; I therefore insisted on going down and lounging round the fine new gallery. When surveying the arrangements for dinner in the splendid dining-room, and the plate on the sideboard, I found the duke standing behind me. He had obviously stolen in to look at his pretty "preparations." He is a modest man, and a little deaf, with very little of the nobleman in his manner; more like a man that could rough it, a devil-may-care sort of manner. I told Hume afterwards I like his duchess better than his duke!

* The "Principles of the Law of Scotland," written by G. J. Bell for the pupils of his class, but which became the handbook for all lawyers in Scotland. It was the first cheap law book.

† The "Commentaries on the Law of Scotland," G. J. Bell's larger work. Charles had ever an admiration of "good handsome quartos."

C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON.

6th August, 1830.

MY DEAR JOHN,

On Tuesday we went down to the parson's, at Luton. I was up at a quarter before four o'clock! and tried for a trout, until I found a miller, who spoke of one he knew of. Then I got into the park, and into a boat with the keeper, and began to try my new rod and trolling tackle (for pike). Heavens! if you had seen me on the first occasion of the monster's rush at me! I caught two fish, one of which measured from my heel to my haunch. You will say "Charlie has very short legs." Be it so, they were large fish to me. Of this class I brought up five. The interest is very great of this kind of fishing, the exercise different. To-day my back and shoulders, and arms, ache in a new set of muscles. The stupid keeper, a Scotchman, lost me two fine fish, by pulling them out of the water by the line, instead of with the gaff, the use of which I showed him. To see the rush of one of those monsters from the dark water, for they take only when there is a breeze, is quite surprising; the motion is quick as an arrow; he seizes the bait so that it lies across his mouth, and when he accomplishes his aim, he remains for a moment motionless, then you pull, and the fight is like that of the devil and the baker.

The park is fine; the trees, the green banks, everything English and magnificent. At twelve o'clock came a deputation (I had breakfasted on

sandwiches and whisky), to say the horses were ready to go to Luton, to see the pictures. I behaved well. The pictures are, indeed, noble specimens of art. This hot drive, after my morning's work, was almost too much, and when I would have demanded and obtained an hour's sleep, I had to dress for Lord and Lady Bute at dinner. They are very amiable.

This was a fatiguing day, and next day up at five o'clock, and so home to town. When I found one of my friends without feet, and another without eyes,* my heart was grateful for my portion of enjoyment.

I think I shall meet you in Scotland. Be very precise, and remember that my duty there is to see my brother and his girls. You must not represent me as a kind of otter following fish only, without humanity or affection.

Ever yours, dear John,

CHARLES BELL.

Have you not been surprised, astonished by the Parisians?† We have got Cuvier here. If your H—— had always spoken French to me, I might have made a great impression.

C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

12*th August*, 1830.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

My last employment here is to give a fête to

* Lord Bute was blind.

† The three days of July.

Baron Cuvier,* who dines with me on Saturday, with certain other savants.

C. B.

My dear George Joseph,

Behold with what I point! †—This hand, how exquisite in form and motion. But first turn over —use it and learn to admire!

I have a letter this morning from the President of the Royal Society, who, with the counsel and approbation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, have proposed to me to write on the *Human Hand*, for which I am to have 1000*l.* This is the Bridgewater Legacy, but I know not what has become of the other 7000*l.*, independent of that to the cats.

I think I know now what to engrave on my seal—a hand. I shall introduce it on all occasions, sometimes doubled to the council, as implying the pugnacious nature of the man—sometimes smooth and open, as ready to receive—sometimes pointing, as from the master. In short, I shall make use of this hand until they acknowledge me a handy fellow!

* * * * *

I had a call from Knight, the bookseller, about Paley, saying that Brougham was delighted with my acceptance of the task of publishing it, and

* When Cuvier was dying, and his fingers twitching the bedclothes, he said to those around him :—"This proves the truth of Charles Bell's nervous system—Ce sont les nerfs de la volonté qui sont malades."

† The sketch followed of a hand outspread on a shield.

that he had been engaged all the vacation in preparing a dissertation on Natural Theology, for the purpose of my adding to it, &c.

I told Knight it really required consideration, telling him, in confidence, of my appointment by the bishops, and that this new spot of work must be first executed, and that I must take time to think of all this.

Your brother,
C. BELL.

The difficulties with the "Council" of the London University had continued throughout this whole year. On more than one occasion Charles Bell had proferred his resignation, but the strong persuasions of personal friends, and of those connected with the University, had hitherto induced him to withdraw it. Towards the end of the year, however, he gave up all connection with the University.

January, 1831.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

* * * * *

We are just as well ignorant of the causes of death which we cannot avert. We are, it seems, a family subject to sudden death—a happiness or misfortune, as it may be. . . . .

I rose this morning dreaming of new exertions as if I were one-and-twenty, and so we creep on and delude ourselves. I have no news; business, hospital, and writing notes on Paley are my

occupations. I told you, I think, of my election into the Council of the College of Surgeons. There have been three meetings since I was a member, but I restrained myself for two, that I might not be too forward, and that I might comprehend fully what the College was about and how situated. Yesterday I opened upon them, and drew a picture of their situation, their array of talent, their museum and library, then declared their inattention in not demanding a control over these Universities. I showed what these new institutions were, and how they would encroach on their ancient establishment, and concluded with the hope that they would institute such courses of lectures as would extend their influence and maintain their preponderance.

C. B.

18th February, 1831.

My dear George,

I begin to lose sight of you altogether. How do matters go on, and how do you like your occupations? And what changes in your town have these great movements produced? Here, I have not been in the way of any agitation. The University, which was wont to be a subject of our correspondence, is going fast to the dogs; misrule and mismanagement are doing their work most efficiently.

By what I can hear, our new Chancellor (Brougham) is doing his work well. . . . .

I have sent him all my little essays on Paley,* and all my little drawings are in the hands of the booksellers, so that I am without work just now. I told Brougham my opinion that he might be better employed just now.

C. B.

25th March, 1831.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Leonard Horner has resigned the Wardenship of the University, fairly scared and worn out by vexation and injustice.† The whole family go abroad.

Heaven be praised! we are all well. We shall begin our country drives again. We have been virtuous during a long winter. I keep my tongue in by giving a clinical lecture once a week; but, from the decay of the London University, and no other schools of anatomy now

* This edition of Paley, though already begun, did not see the light for several years later. The first volume in 1835, the second and third, by Sir C. Bell, in 1836. One of his wife's notes of this year says, "The Lord-Chancellor was much taken up with his Introductory Essay, and Charles' notes on Paley. The official box was constantly brought with new and corrected manuscript. One evening, in going to my mother's at Richmond, he put it into the hood of the phaeton, and stopped for a visit on the way. On coming to Richmond, it was found that the hood had been cut through, and everything in it carried off. His dismay at losing the precious manuscript, which he had brought out to study, may be imagined. Happily, I had placed it for safety under the cushion."

† Mr. Horner came to tell Charles Bell that he meant to resign, and asked what he should say. "My dear Leonard," was the reply, "stand up, show yourself, and say, 'Gentlemen, I came to your University comfortable and well filled up—look at me now, shrivelled and thin, my clothes a world too wide.' That would be true eloquence."

near the Middlesex Hospital, I fear I must look for a falling off in that department also.

P.S. Dear George, the contents of this show that I have nothing to write about, God be praised.

Yours,

C. B.

No date, 1831.

DEAR GEORGE,

This confounded Reform Bill, which will do no earthly good, plagues us all in our various degrees. If I could afford it this year, you see, I could not leave town—for to leave town when Parliament is sitting, is to declare myself indifferent to practice, on which now my very existence depends. This entire dependence at my time of life on practice is a great misfortune, but, conducted as the London University has been, there was no alternative.

I have of late been out of sorts, and so I went off to the country for three nights, but returned after the second quite well; nor could I be very ill, since I was up and out at four o'clock, and I had seen my first trout before I heard the mower's scythe, which was the first sign of there being living creatures in all the country side. I have got an order for Lord Cowper's water at Panshanger, which is a sweet valley with a pretty running water. The trout are as large as young salmons, and give me great sport. These English parks are, as you well know, the great ornaments

of England. They afford solitude and picturesque beauties. We make our temporary home in some adjoining village inn. These inns have every comfort in a small way. Without these little expeditions, I am quite certain that I could not live in London—the more especially as the little objects of ambition which so long kept me afloat and struggling in this great tide, have no longer any attraction for me. However, I am not idle, and I long to be again at original investigation, and to prepare papers for the Royal Society. I have very nearly done with my Essay on the Hand, and, if I had it in a decent form, I would immediately send it to you for your opinion. I am getting some pretty illustrations for it done in wood, and I am not without hopes that the *thing* may sell.

I hate Richmond, where Mrs. Shaw has taken a house. It is a Sunday place—no home quiet or retirement. Steamboats and French horns, and vulgar dressed women, and idle London young men, and Star-and-Garter parties and riders. My poor wife is very jealous of my preference of Chenies, Latimers, and Panshanger —the seats of the Duke of Bedford, Lord George Cavendish, and Lord Cowper—where half a sovereign to the keeper gives me possession of miles of wood and water, with nothing but hares and pheasants to startle me from the bushes, and *trout* leaping in the water.

C. B.

3rd September, 1831.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You have got a notion, I see, that I am very touchy about my writing! Everybody corrects my writing, and welcome. But you don't correct —you write anew. . . . . You look upon this * as too great a matter. I think a lecture or a paper to the Royal Society of much greater moment. I have done better things than this, or than I shall ever do again. It will do me no good to enter the lists with fine writers. From the Chancellor to his little bookseller (who writes better than any of us), the encyclopedists are all writing the same stuff. And here are eight men more to wear the subject to the bone—all at the same work. You cannot wonder that I long to be at original matter and compositions—at science rather than writing. . . . . What you suggest would make a large and consequently a tedious volume, which nobody would read, however good. It must be a slight and, if possible, an elegant *sketch*, a thing of easy digestion. You take too serious a view of it. My character does not depend on a thing of this kind.

* * * * *

I have something of the D——, too, to push me on—not a bad thing. I wish some of our friends in St. Stephen's had him on their back, and his heels on their sides.

Yours,

C. B.

* The Hand.

FROM G. J. BELL IN LONDON TO HIS DAUGHTER IN EDINBURGH.

October, 1831.

MY DEAR B——,

. . . . The report still is that the Lords are to throw out the (Reform) Bill, and gloomy thoughts are entertained as to the effects of it. Parliament will certainly be prorogued if the Bill don't pass, and all this world of people will be let off like bullets from a cross-bow. The Peers individually are thought to be in some danger. The Duke of Wellington has for a long time had the windows of his splendid mansion boarded up on the outside, but they say this will only serve as a mark for destruction; and not the windows, but the beautiful mirrors which, on gala nights, draw out of the wall to shut the windows; not the bedroom windows left unbarricaded—not all these will satisfy the enraged Bull (John). He will kick and toss everything belonging to the mansion into the air. . . . .

5th October.

This is a time in which everything yields to interest in the great question, "What will the Lords do?" The Lord-Advocate is not well. The Lord-Chancellor is extraordinary for activity, self-possession, and command of time. He seems to have leisure at all times to do everything; and, though there is peculiarity in that, it is a thing to be imitated, not despised. I have had no quiet talk with him yet.

To-day, the Order of the Guelph was sent to Charles, and had he been ready for going to the levée he would have been now Sir Charles.

I have been at the House of Lords, but the crowd was so great that, though I had the Chancellor's order, I did not remain. I'll go down in the evening. The hopes of the Reformers are high. The Attorney-General told me that he is very confident. The Chancellor will speak to-morrow or next day.

9th.

You see the Bill is rejected! What is to be the consequence, no one knows; but the Ministry is staunch, and I trust the country will be quiet. In the perturbed state of things, I have got little done. . . . . I was engaged to breakfast with Murray, but I got confined in the House of Lords. It sat till between six and seven in the morning; the Chancellor's speech magnificent.

This morning, about 11 o'clock, came on the most portentous-looking darkness I ever beheld. There was thunder, but not in our quarter. If the Bill had passed, the Tories would have said it was the wrath of Heaven. . . . .

Evening.

The town is quiet, but meetings are held in all quarters, and there will be such a demonstration in the country as will, I think, bring things right. They talk of Brougham and the Duke going to make a Reform. I don't think that likely.

Brougham is in great spirits. There are to be deputations from all quarters to address the King on Wednesday—the shops to be shut, &c.

TO MISS BELL FROM *LADY* BELL.

12th October, 1831.

MY DEAREST B——,

I have had a busy forenoon dressing our Knight of the Guelph. I assure you he looks very grand, like Sir Charles Grandison, in his Court dress—dark-brown and cut steel, white satin waistcoat, chapeau, sword, buckles, point d'Alençon frills and cuffs, and his Order with the Blue Ribbon. It is like a judgment on him to be obliged to do anything half so disagreeable as all this parade, but I am writing, waiting till he returns. This is the most extraordinary levée that ever was held. 30,000 people are to assemble with banners to petition the King. I hope his card, "presented by the Lord Chancellor," will secure good treatment for him!

4 o'Clock.

Here are your papa and Charles Shaw. Great crowds, dirty streets, and no rioting, is all I can gain from them.

5 o'Clock.

And here comes *Sir* Charles! Your papa and Charlie are writing to you, so I have little more to say than the often and true-told story, that I am your very affectionate

MARION BELL.

I find I have time to tell you that Herschel and your uncle were the only two of the six there. There were so many deputations to be presented, that he was kept an immense time, and does not admire a courtier's life; but he is in very good spirits.

The new Knight's own notes on the subject were as follows:—

12th October, 1831.

This Guelphic Order of Knighthood came very unexpectedly. On coming home I found Marion and George in possession of a box of trinkets, and they puzzled me to guess what it was. However, I found the Order of the Guelph with a note from the Chancellor, hoping that it would be convenient for me to come to Court that morning to be knighted.

The members of my family were always given to a little nicety in dress, and I found the impossibility of going to Court for reasons which had influenced many a better man before me—the state of my nether garments!

The whole family insisted on this being a mere excuse, and I let them dress me in borrowed Court dress, feeling very sheepish. But when at length I saw, in my wife's dressing-glass, myself thus decked out, the absurdity of the whole exhibition was too apparent. I broke away from their importunities with an energy of language that con-

vinced them I was in earnest. I was forced to make my excuses for not attending that day.

On the following levée I was a little better provided, and had my lesson when to kneel and when to kiss hands.

I confess myself to have been gratified by this distinction, that is, from the manner and time in which it has been conferred. The intended batch consisted of Herschel, Babbage, Leslie, Ivory, and Brewster, the object being to show respect from Government for men of science, and it was determined that the Guelphic Order should become the mark of distinction for scientific men. We shall soon see what comes of this! How many are there who think themselves deserving of this honour! However, in the meantime, the batch makes it respectable.

I persuaded Herschel that on this occasion he represented the higher sciences, and that, therefore he must precede me in receiving the accolade, and he did precede me into the presence chamber, but in approaching the lord in waiting he lost heart, and suddenly countermarched, so that I found myself in front. My niece's dancing-master having acted the king the night before, I had no difficulty.

FROM SIR C. BELL TO HIS WIFE AT RICHMOND.

16*th October*, 1831.

My dear Love,

You know how everybody has a pen and paper except me, and yet you ask me to write!

As to George Joseph, he *was* going, but says I, "Have you told Brougham?" That was a new idea, so I sent him to make an appointment with James Brougham; this led to his breakfasting with the Chancellor, to his going down with him to the House, to further engagements with him, and a consultation with various others on the state of the courts below. So, my dear, you may chance to see him again and take leave.

But as the trout must be fairly worn out with expectation of seeing me at Chenies, it is quite impossible for me to wait the coming of events. Off I must be on Monday, unless it rain old wives and pikestaffs.

I drove to-day with post-horses to Millhill, and took George Joseph with me, who was in high delight with the country. It was, indeed, very pretty.

Of course you saw the announcement in the "Gazette" this morning? I hope it was to your satisfaction? We are, after all, only third-rate, but it signifies not a whit—time and occasion is all in all.

Roberts does not let me forget my honours. I come in quiet, feeling the hubbub over, when I am met with "Sir Charles," first from John Coachman, and then from him. I only hope that it will teach them increase of civility.

At 12 o'clock of the night I left you, I thought somehow that the house felt unsettled, and on going downstairs and calling, the kitchen-door

was opened, when there burst from below a sound of knives, spoons, and plates, with a fragrant smell of meat, brandy, and wine!

No doubt they were drinking my lady's health.

Your affectionate K. G. H.

1832.

C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON, ESQ.

2nd August, 1832.

BROOK STREET, GROSVENOR SQ.

MY DEAR JOHN,

A few weeks have made a curious change in our relative positions. I am here as in a new world,* and were it not for the duties of the hospital, I could imagine that I had come into another country. What a strange, plastic, and accommodating spirit there is in human nature which makes us bear any condition.

All lesser subjects of anxiety, and all discomforts are swallowed up in my fears on account of Marion's health, which makes me of an evening try to sum up and think of a quiet passage to a welcome home. But I am active and youthful in my employments; business is nearly as productive as it has been. I have just revised my paper (on the organs of the human voice) for the Royal Society, and I am preparing some clinical lectures that I may hold up the hospital in October. I have made sundry sketches for my wife's book; the last, Dumbiedike's taking leave

* He had lately moved from Soho Square.

of Jeanie on the wildyard powney. In short, I combat wayward thoughts that slide in. I am, besides, in the midst of carpenters and painters.

I squint sometimes at my rods and tackle, but I do not let my fingers touch them. God grant, when I do, they may not have lost their power of making a boy of me.

Well! we shall have a day—a day to enjoy, and a day to tell for many days and nights over a glass—hitherto all in the future, hereafter in the preterite tense.

We shall look back as well as forward with a high troll ol ol! trol ol li!

C. B.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Judge Alderson—Ancrum—Edinburgh—Merchiston House—Apology of the Fisher—The Tweed—Examination on the Medical Bill before a Committee of the House of Commons—Meeting of the British Association in Edinburgh—Old Recollections—Effect of "the Country" on Composition—Founding of the School of the Middlesex Hospital—Lyndhurst—Lord Palmerston's Park—Ringwood—Christchurch—Edinburgh Professorship—Hesitation—Acceptance.

1833 TO 1836.

SIR C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

25th January, 1833.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Yesterday we dined with Judge Alderson and ten barristers. They are a curious set. Law cases and quotations of Latin classics formed all their conversation. After being long mute, I gave them some new ideas! I hope Jeffrey has not to stand a contested election.

Your affectionate

C. B., *M.D.*, *Gott.*

The Professors of Gottingen paid me the compliment—such a compliment as I most value—the association of my name with a good man. Sir Astley Cooper and I received the degree of M.D. from them at the same time. He had formerly visited their University: I never.

SIR C. BELL TO HIS WIFE.

28th September, 1833.

The scene is changed, and now he is in Edinburgh! and who in the world is that?

Give me time. Yesterday I fished, and "daundered," and drew cuddies. Then went to dine with our good friends at Sir William Scott's (Ancrum). I found myself in a large drawing-room in an old castellated house, dim, almost dark, and with a large party—not knowing a single person, and, from the want of an introduction, really in difficulty. When we went to the well-lighted dining-room, the good, unaffected Lady Scott, took my arm, and relieved me somewhat. The whole dinner was a speculation of —who are you? Something of this, hereafter.

Well, I parted from our excellent kind friends this morning, Friday 27th, and came in by the Blucher. I took a hackney-coach to the Royal Hotel, since I had three letters directing me there. They had never heard of Sir Charles Bell, but were vastly glad to receive him. I felt queerish—a stranger at home—very odd this, not knowing well where to turn. However, I ordered dinner for two, thinking of getting Patrick to come to my relief.

There I stood, admiring the old town,—when I think, in an hour's time, by a wag of my finger, I had with me the following guests:—Patrick, Geo. J. Bell, Geo. H. Bell, Rutherford, Capt. Rutherford, the Lord Advocate, and Professor

Jameson!!! Was not this very well? The master of the house seemed inclined to keep me as a sort of dining-partner of the concern.

But, before all this—before I took my stand at the window—I went forth to wander among the tombs. When going along George Street—rather disconsolate—I saw before me a good figure of a lady, in a fussy pelisse, and hands extended to meet me. Come, thinks I, I am not so badly off after all. This explains the frontispiece of my letter.*

But all these gentlemen did not dine with you? No; only Geo. Jos. So we had our two courses and our bottle in a very odd, dreamy sort of way; and as it fell dark, we took a hackney-coach here to Merchiston.

* * * * *

Your own

C. BELL.

MERCHISTON HOUSE, NEAR EDINBURGH,
1*st October*, 1833.

MY DEAR MAY,

I have got into my bedroom—such a room as the antiquary introduced Lovel into—the fire-light reflected on the warm-coloured bed and curtains and arm-chair. But instead of describing all the goodness of the inmates, and the comforts of this old mansion, I shall vindicate my late exertions in the way of fishing.

In the first place, it is a pastime for all ages,

* Sketch of a lady and gentleman meeting.

and most healthful. (The other day the Marquis warned off old Dr. Jameson, the author of the Dictionary—much to the disgrace of the said Lord.) And the great otter, the man who lives by fishing and on fish, and whom I saw with a salmon, is fourscore and one years of age; and his son, my attendant, told me that his father never knew a day's illness. It is a healthful and pleasant pastime.

In the next, let us acknowledge the beauties of nature discovered by the fisherman, when others are dead to them. I was one day on the Teviot —the valley expands—and standing in the river, the eye ranges from Minto Crag to Teviot Bank, some six or ten miles, while the banks are beautiful slopes, with cattle on the margin, and cornfields, without an enclosure, leading the eye to the dark mountain top. The day was one of the seven days in the year for which the fisherman waits impatiently—breezy and cloudy; and from time to time came off from the Cheviots a cloud, which, pouring down, raised the fish—and the waters too. Now I like to see the tempest sweep over such a country, whilst my dress and my exercise make me quite insensible to any injurious or even unpleasant effect of the wetting: as it clears, you are dry again.

Now, I don't say a word of the fishing, but of the scenery. Next day I took the Ale—a small river running over rock, and having deep, dark pools, with overhanging rocks, and ancient fan-

tastic trees. The solitude and gloom of some of the turns of this river were very striking. The only living and moving thing was the miller,—the damming up of the river indicated the approach of a scene of comfort and activity; still, the mill of necessity is picturesquely placed under the rocks and among the trees,—and out comes the man in curious contrast to yourself—the white, mealy miller. The noise of the water, and the clack of the mill, admits of no colloquy; and he emerges from the mill window like a figure in a play-house scene. And three such pictures did I fall upon, where you may suppose secluded innocence to dwell—but for the poaching of the millers,—the deil tak' them. They salt the trouts! Think of trouts being salted like a pot of herrings! I was tempted to take my pencil, but drawing and wet fishing-dress I found incompatible. The mind may be improved, filled with delightful recollections, but it won't do to sit and sketch, unless it be before the rising of a great trout has tempted you into the water. After this, the whole secret is to keep moving, and then come health and spirits and a monstrous appetite.

My room here is at the end of a long passage: all is hushed, and the large, old-fashioned bed—"like the ministers"—invites to sleep,—so, Good night! The family are quite well. We had music last night. The girls are all you could wish them, and everybody likes them. The house, garden, and views, such as admit of no improvement.

"Papa" as busy as ever; and I am not inclined to say a word against anybody.

Your own affectionate

C. B.

I am thinking of looking southward on Wednesday. I have had fees from three consultations to-day, and meet eleven doctors at G. H. Bell's to-morrow. I expect more consultations if I can wait another day. Chantry off to the Tweed. Sir C. Bell a very good boy.

HAREstanes, *3rd October*, 1833.

On Friday I fished the beautiful Tweed, and on Saturday intended to take a post-chaise and join the mail at Hawick; but my state of stomach, and the uncertainty of finding a seat, have induced me to spend the Sunday in repose of body and spirit here. In all respects, I am in health as I left you; that you know is well. I do confess a little disappointment that this condition of stomach is not removed. After struggling with a salmon, I thought I should have died with painful distension; and yet I am convinced this is the life to ward off the more formidable effects, —and could I be sure you were well and enjoying yourself, I should prolong my stay. But I believe I shall be better, and certainly happier, with you. I wish you had come with me. You would have found your friends here* most kind, and the

* The Richardsons.

family in Merchiston all you could desire—loving one another, and respected.

I am going out to a solitary walk with my paper and pencil and a book. Mrs. Richardson fatigued, and unable to go out. I hope to make you a "clever sketch." You are the sole point of interest in my life. . . . .

. . . . . I wish I had time to let out my line about that same Tweed,—its haughs, and wolds, and holms, and castelled heights, and the fine wild drive over the Lydard Edge—the field of a battle in Henry VIII.'s time. I must again have recourse to border history. I hope to be home almost as soon as this.

C. BELL TO SIR G. J. BELL.

October, 1833.

DEAR GEORGE,

I have spent two days on the Tweed. Nothing on earth could be finer than the scene and the weather. There is a romance in the Tweed, and the banks expand in haughs and woods, and are characterised with ruins.

We had a stupid keeper with us, in whom we trusted too much. He said there were bits of beasties in the pools, but no salmon. I put on my finest tackle, such as I would fish with for trout. I struck a fish, but never saw him. I hooked a noble fellow, and played him for a quarter of an hour, until he showed his side like a sow, but at length he ran out my line, got into a heavy stream, and snap went my fine gut. I

caught a fine "gilse" as the chap called it, and that was all. Richardson took a salmon with great dexterity; and now being convinced of having a fine salmon fishing within five miles of him, he has got another item in his sources of happiness here. I have at least done him that service.

1834.

5th May, 1834.

DEAR GEORGE,

To-day I was examined before the House of Commons on the state of the profession.* Mr. Warburton, the chairman of the committee, was pleased to say that he had got more from me than he had altogether. I returned the compliment by saying that he used the probe with great dexterity.

Warburton's perseverance and acuteness are remarkable. We exhausted each other. For my part I was bathed in perspiration, and my temples beating from this keen encounter.

I insisted, before submitting to this searching examination, on laying down some general and acknowledged principles. We shall see what will be the issue of all this inquiry.

C. B.

The meeting of the British Association for the advancement of science took place this year in

* The Medical Bill, before Parliament.

Edinburgh. Sir Charles and Lady Bell on the occasion came to G. J. Bell's, at the old house of Merchiston, close to Fountain Bridge, the suburb of Edinburgh, where the two brothers had spent their earliest years.

The associations roused in Charles' mind by a return to this spot were scarcely those of memory, for he had left it when almost an infant, but the sound of the familiar names he had heard from his mother's lips brought back to him many reminiscences of his childhood, and suggested some curious notes afterwards found among his papers.

Of these one or two were connected with the part he took in the scientific meeting.

* * * * *

"The situation in which I experienced the most extraordinary union of contending emotions was in addressing the section to which I belonged. Having occasion to speak, it gave rise to a general wish that I should address them more formally on the mode of studying the nervous system.

"We met in the anatomical theatre, in the place where I had first received my lessons in anatomy. I had reasons to regret that I had not more maturely considered my task, when I found the class-room crowded, and all my friends who had risen to eminence, before me; the reverend Principal and medical professors, many of the judges, clergy, &c., &c., of Edinburgh. In short, instead of a theatre of young men, the benches were filled with

the most respectable and learned of my own standing. My first address was at least true to my natural feelings. I said that Professor Sedgwick had in his lecture of the evening before spoken feelingly of the monuments which he saw had been raised to men of genius since his last visit to Edinburgh; but for my own part, returning after a long absence to my native city, every remarkable object, every street, every corner, brought to my recollection some circumstance important to life, and it seemed to me as if I walked in a city of tombs.

"Taking the compliments paid to me on this occasion as matters of course, I trust I was useful in removing a very prevailing notion of the medical men of Edinburgh that I was pugnacious and sarcastic.

"I took the opportunity of saying that in stating the course of my own reflections, and the mode in which I had proceeded, I left controversy to my younger friends; that in spending the greater part of my life in the duty of teaching, I had educated many to the profession who knew the correctness of my statements, the mode and succession in which my ideas had developed themselves, and who were as willing as capable of defending me against illiberal attacks.

"Already on looking back it seems hardly real, and much like a dream, that I was engaged after a period of thirty-five years in giving a lecture in the theatre of Munro, and so vivid were the recol-

lections, that I dreamt I again saw and heard the old gentleman, and with this dream I opened my second lecture, describing the sensation of my first awaking (to find) that I had actually to speak where he had spoken, and, on a subject the most difficult to make intelligible to a general audience."*

1835.

SIR C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

29th March, 1835.

MY DEAREST GEORGE,

To-day I had a message from Lord Brougham, by Mr. Knight, resuming the old subject of *Paley*. It seems his lordship has written as much as will make a volume. It has always occurred to me that Paley's works are unfit to build upon—that their simplicity and almost childishness have been the sources of the popularity of that book, and that my illustrations would be liable to such criticism as is applicable to an artist who rears cumbrous heavy columns on a light ornamental frieze.

Times, too, are strangely altered, both with Lord Brougham and me. His fault has been attempting too much, and his weakness in doing things the most opposite in their nature at the same time.

With regard to myself, writing on these subjects has been a real hindrance to me, for having written "Animal Mechanics" and the "Bridge-

* See Appendix. Letter from Archdeacon Sinclair.

water Treatise," I feel that I have done enough on that subject for the present.

If I could gain a little leisure, if I had a little country retirement, or were I so ill as to be excused from business, I know no occupation that would be more delightful; but with the pressure of business and of anxieties of another kind, I feel that I can do no justice to the subject, for a man must both think and feel deeply, and be pleased with everything around him before he can possess himself of that tone of mind necessary to the undertaking.

If there be any best bits in the *Hand*, they were written after a day of comparative retirement and relaxation at Panshanger or Chenies. I have tasked myself while throwing a line how I should express myself on going to the little inn to tea. It is thus that one has the justest and fairest views of nature, which I believe would never rise into the mind of him who has the pressure of business upon him, at least such business as mine.

There is another occasion which has never failed to animate me with just views, that is when my class is gathered about me, and when I enter into the feelings of young men, and am anxious to answer their enthusiastic desire of knowledge, and to give them just and consolatory views of nature.

It is long since I have enjoyed this sort of animating intercourse.

29th June, 1835.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

We have founded a school in the garden of the Middlesex Hospital. The building will be a complete little thing—theatre, museum, clinical class-room, and dissecting room. But you must admire my spirit to commence such an undertaking at this day. I promise to the extent of sixty lectures. To the work I have no objection, but there will be a great outlay also, although, from the way in which it is taken up by our governors, I believe subscriptions will cover all expenses. The building will cost 2400*l.*

I met Brougham, who is in great spirits about his volume.* He wished to go out fishing with me! A pretty fellow to land a trout!

22nd July.

Would you believe that our school is already roofed? It seems like magic. We pay for that, however. But for dispatch we might have had it built for much less.

Paley is printing fast, and I hope it will make a pleasing and popular work.

Yours, C. B.

LYNDHURST, *7th September.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You know I always write to you when I leave

* Preliminary Discourse on *Paley*. On first beginning his labours on *Paley*, Sir Charles, unaware of Lord Brougham's intention to write a preliminary discourse, himself composed an introduction. It had gone so far as to be printed, but was, of course, cancelled on learning Lord Brougham's intentions.

town. Here we are, in the midst of the New Forest, Hampshire. We have travelled with the two black horses thus far in much enjoyment. Nor have I been quite idle, and I say my purse is like the widow's cruse. I am at least, even now, after all our enjoyment (thanks to fees) richer than when I set off.

We visited a family with whom I had been in correspondence, and found much elegance, and kindness, and flattery. We are childish enough to keep a journal, and one day you shall see our remarks on pictures and scenery. I find in my criticisms on pictures, I can give an interest by a sketch, especially as indicating the general effects. I have long thought England as rich in pictures as Italy itself.

Of course fishing. I fished at Alresford, and to day was up at five to fish in Lord Palmerston's park. We are now in the midst of the Forest and the centre of pretty drives. It will go hard but I shall have some sketching to-morrow, altho' we drove here in the midst of rain—the first, I think, for three months. But now the moonshine on the village spire gives promise of delights to-morrow.

9th September.

We have to-day enjoyed what we pleased to do—a whole day spent in the Forest; dined under the trees, and sketched ragged oaks and ragged ponies. Nothing can equal the beauty of this part of the country; the alleys green; the

masses of dark foliage; the peeps of the distant landscape, in which we see the blue line of the Isle of Wight. . . . .

Came home; corrected proofs; wrote lecture.

To-morrow, we take Ringwood and Christchurch, where M. will take a dip—and I have letters to park and pleasure-grounds. We are then at the end of our tether, and must swing round. I feel strange to be here, so far south. But few know England. It is indeed bright and fair, and the young folks very handsome. To-day we saw a school of boys break forth, all pretty little fellows, trying to get up a battle between two who would not fight. Not a bubbly nose or a big mouth among them. I delight to think B—— is enjoying the country. Any letters from Charlie? * I left the school in great forwardness, and by this time they are filling the museum.

Ever, dear George, your affectionate

C. B.

7th October, 1835.

DEAR GEORGE,

I don't think I have written to you since I began the lectures, establishing a school in the old Middlesex. At least, my spirit and devotion to the art and to the institution to which I am attached, will not be denied.

I have delivered six lectures, such as only long

* George Bell's eldest son, C. W. Bell, had just quitted England as physician to Her Britannic Majesty's embassy to Persia.

experience and study could have produced. I lecture to some sixty pupils—which, for a beginning, is as much as we could expect. The medicine and surgery being ten, twelve, fifteen, &c., I have a heavy lift—but the thing shall be done, and well done.

N.B. I have received not one guinea from these lectures, and expect none. On the contrary, I have subscribed 50*l.* as one of the hospital surgeons, 30*l.* as a lecturer. Nevertheless, the main object will be gained—the preserving the hospital respectable.

You will be hearing from Trebizonde soon. I see the steamer has returned to Constantinople.

Paley is stopped; I don't know why. I believe they have engaged Knight, the bookseller, with the Poor Law Commission—and this is the only reason.

I now return to the cheap and complete edition of my Nervous System.

Your affectionate

C. B.

27th November, 1835.

My dear George,

This change in my course of life * is urged on all hands from Edinburgh. But I do not think that you or they know what I shall have to resign. My hospital, my place in the Council of the College, my honourable professorship, my

* To accept the Chair of Surgery in the Edinburgh University, if offered to him.

ornamented home, my practice, and my attached friends.

No man, unless he hold a high reputation here, can justly conceive the gratification of attending practice in London. . . . . However, it has ever been my pride to join the pursuits of science (and lecturing is of all conditions the most conducive to scientific pursuits) and practice. In surgery they cannot safely be separated. The condition which you have planned for me so far accords with my opinion since expressed and often repeated. It has been, in truth, under that conviction that I have just formed a school at the Middlesex Hospital—and you cannot imagine a prettier thing than that school. And what will our governors say, when the school is just built and furnished, were I to leave them ?

* * * * *

Were I to close my sense against the pain of resigning all here which has hitherto been my pride, I could imagine many happy circumstances in a life devoted to the University. But enough at present. I shall expect to hear from you.

Your affectionate brother,

C. BELL.

28th November, 1835.

DEAR GEORGE,

I hope you understood my letter of yesterday as accepting the office in case of its coming to ought. I say this because I desire to be free of

blame, either from you or any friends who might say, "You have refused this."

Brougham, I learn, has written that he would advise me to accede. Richardson, with the tear in his eye, is advocate for this change. . . . .

8th December.

I have seen enough to satisfy me of what the world can offer a man—I mean this great world; and were you to look back to my letters, you would find the opinion uniformly expressed that the place of a professor who *fills his place* is the most respectable in life. My hands are better for operation than any I have seen at work; but an operating surgeon's life has no equivalent reward in this world; and some, from coarseness, want of feeling, and stupidity, deserve in the next . . . . ! I must be the teacher and consulting surgeon to be happy. Do you remember this is the fifth offer I have had to return to lecturing? This, surely, marks me as not unfit, and yet I have been *dislocated*, and I feel it.

Yours, C. BELL.

FROM G. J. BELL TO HIS BROTHER.

6, DARNAWAY STREET, EDINBURGH,
8th December, 1835.

MY DEAR CHARLES,

You are now an adopted member of this University, and with the unanimous assent and acclamation of a Town Council composed of persons of all parties, chosen by the several wards of

this intellectual City. And surely never was an offer more honourable to an individual, for I do assure you it has the approbation of all ranks and classes of men, and of none more than the Professors of the University and the whole medical profession. . . . .

There is a universal cordiality, and all are ready to receive you, not only without jealousy, distrust, or heart-burning, but with open arms.

I have not seen the letter to be sent to you, but the Provost came to my retiring-room in the College to tell me how enthusiastically all had adopted the proposition.

Write to *me* as well as to the Provost.

Yours, G. J. B.

SIR C. BELL TO G. J. BELL.

13*th December*, 1835.

DEAR GEORGE,

There!

I have finished your Lord Provost's letter. I thought it right to write by return of post.

Give me a picture how we are to live—a pleasant one, if possible.

Yestreen I sat between the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Vice-Chancellor, Sir H. Halford, &c. Can you place me so in Auld Reekie? Tell me about houses.

Yours, C. BELL.

CHAPTER XIX.

Leaving London—Strange Sensations on reaching Edinburgh—Kindly Reception in Edinburgh—Lord Lothian's Waters—Craigie Hall—Examination of young Doctors—Queen's Proclamation at the Cross—Visit to London—Jeffreys—Sir Astley Cooper—Winter in Edinburgh—View from Ainslie Place—Fishing with Christopher North—Vision of the Day of Judgment—Recollections of Chenies—Kinfauns Castle—Frank from "Douro"—Life's Difficulties—Lockhart's Life of Scott—Pettigrew's Memoir of "Sir Charles Bell."

1836 TO 1839.

SIR C. BELL TO MISS BELL.

August, 1836,
30, BROOK STREET.

MY DEAR B.

The house is in a bustle. Books gone—pictures packing! People surveying the house! This does look like a change. All my sacred corners usurped—a naked house—no longer a home. Let us, in Heaven's name, to the road; for until I build up a corner in Ainslie Place, and see familiar things about me, I shall be like a bird whose nest is in a boy's hat!

I leave no enemy behind me, and Marion is universally beloved—such kissing and present-

making. "Why, then," as they say, "go?" Because there is a time, and that time draws near, when London is intolerable. Every friend away: these streets and squares deserted.

Whilst the season lasts, our society is all we could wish; but now our friends hurry to their better houses in the country, where they invite us, but where we cannot go. Many a long day we have been left solitary in a crowd, losing spirits and health.

Without independent fortune, the relations which we have formed with society are not without their drawbacks. I must be independent, and through exertion more than fortune. I must pursue that course through which I have attained station, to feel comfortable. I could have made a fortune, and so my friends say, but I could not also attain to what I am, and to what they would have me.

I have been taking leave, and my heart is sick, so if your aunt is not ready to move, I shall go a stage by myself! There is not a book or familiar thing remaining in the house. Adieu.

Yours, C. B.

FROM CHARLES BELL'S NOTE-BOOK.

1836.

. . . . Since I came to Edinburgh I often feel as in a dream. To-day I have been jolted in a carriage for miles to a consultation with a man I deemed old in my younger days, and of whom

I ceased to think but of one gone by. And then the old stories, the old names; names, place, and character the same, with younger faces—or the younger of ——, now the elder—and the girls in the places of their mothers. Gratification there is, but also pain. On looking back on the characters and lives of many, how easy is it to say why they did not succeed in the game of life—the manner, the propensity, or passion — pride, jealousy, and bad temper, have reduced many who might have risen if measured by their abilities or acquirements. Yet how difficult to change that one trait on which all depends!

1837.

SIR C. BELL TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ.

Sunday, 26*th February*, 1837,
6, AINSLIE PLACE, EDINBURGH.

MY DEAR JOHN,

Nobody visits to-day! It is a time of perfect quiet, when our prevailing thoughts and feelings become masters over us.

Do you know, I think you should give your girls the advantages of this place? Young people must like it. Private parties with music, concerts and balls, and masters and lessons, all at once. There is a great propensity to friendly meetings, and a great facility, too.

Think of this, and manage it so that your family pass part of the season here where you have abundance of friends.

We are overwhelmed with kindness. I fight hard against it; but three dinners in the week swallowed, and six refused, is the rate of invitation of the last week. But I am forgetting my object in all this,—it is to remind you that this is a capital house, with two spare rooms, and all your old friends within a gun-shot, and all living in harmony and kindness. London is a cold place—people do not meet as if they wished and meant to live together. It is only in county relationship what I mean, and what you may have here.

I go to a bachelor dinner to-day to George Dundas, to meet Cockburn. We shall talk of fishing. Sir William Scott has been out and caught two salmon. I met Lord Lothian. He reminded me that I had the command of his waters. Who do you think introduced me to his Lordship's brother-in-law but the Duchess of Buccleugh. You know my selfish object in knowing fine folk? to let me have free access to their streams. I thought of your assurance that there was good fishing in Dalkeith Park. Is this very idle? But it is after a week of regular systematic attention to my duties. It was professional duties that brought me in contact with these personages.

Yours, C. B.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

29th March, 1837,
6, AINSLIE PLACE.

MY DEAR JOHN,

I weary and long to hear from you: besides, you should consider how often I am applied to here by your friends to know about you.

We have strange weather. Where I sit I see the cloud rising in the N.-West. On it comes, involving us in sleet and rain, to give place to bright sunshine; and so alternately for these many days, checking vegetation and showing no lively green.

Still I look for a day by some waterside. I was half inclined to take Sir William Scott's invitation to Ancrum, but I could not unless the glen were peopled by your boys and girls. I am thinking of an exploring expedition, the first time I can, in the phaeton, on a Friday.

I am busy from morning to night—never without object or employment, but nothing to tell of. You would not have me tell you of my preparations for lecture, or the miseries I see in patients? Unless it be our evenings—Marion reading to me while I sketch for lecture—there is nothing with which I should desire your sympathy.

Scott's Life, I think, will give you pleasure—rather too much.

I saw all the manuscripts of the poems and novels this morning, and most extraordinary they are. *Old Mortality* written at once, and without a blot, and hardly a correction.

22nd June.

I dreamed last night of old times and very old scenes, owing, I believe, to your letter. You have not kept your promise to take a day of Chenies. I am very constant in my attachment to the trout and the waterside; and if you are wise, you will resign none of your pastimes as marking the coming of age.

Our drives here are delightful. Marion forced me the other day from the water in Craigie-hall to take a drive through Dalmeny Park. If you have not been there, you must go with us. Nothing more rich and splendid than the views of the Firth from the grounds, and sometimes the distant view of the town.

Well, you are working hard for the privilege of these enjoyments. . . . . Lady Gifford and her girls were here last night, and young Scott. I am pleased with myself for liking that young man. I think him good, unaffected, and sincere. It is agreeable to love what belonged to old Sir Walter.

Your friends here are all well. Of all feasts, nothing so perfect as Lord C——'s: up to plate and powdered flunkies. Harry Cockburn is in clover; Jeffrey gay on a Saturday;—in short this is a pleasant land to live in.

I am at present engaged in the examination of the young doctors—no pleasant task—from one till half-past five daily, which interrupts both study and business.

It appears, by report, that the King cannot live, so we shall have you down soon.

And, lo! he is gone, and we have a little Queen! Now this touches me only as relieving you. Do not delay, the summer is divine, and such as Scotland has not seen for long. Your trees you will find in full dress to receive you. We are more than repaid for our winter.

I have kind invitations to the Tweed, and I am planning an expedition to Old Melrose. Yet if I thought you would soon be down, I would keep a "*pose*" to come to you.

My delight has been to gratify George Joseph. He has been often out with me as happy as a boy.

23rd.

I must be off to act the pageant of proclaiming the Queen; and so we have seen four reigns, dear John; it recalls times full of painful interest, God help us! But to conclude, I have got a new rod, a new reel, and new line, and abundance of hooks, so do you contrive that we soon meet, and that you be old John. Ever your old

CARL.

You can exhibit nothing in London like this exhibition in old Edinburgh—so picturesque, so well grouped, and with such a back-scene; the clouds, too, came down to act a part, like the pasteboards in the Theatre, and wept for the old King, and the sun smiled for the young Queen.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

8th July, 1837.

MY DEAR JOHN,

There is but one thing I wish to say in answer to your letter.* Do not, I pray you, now, or at any time, refrain from expressing your thoughts to me on the subject of your griefs. I live a good deal in old times. We have run a parallel for two-and-thirty years, and no subject is so mournfully sweet as the recollection of the time past with your admirable and perfect wife, our escapes from town to Hampstead, and our anticipations of scenes in Scotland!

I am, above all, thankful that I am not left alone in that heartless place. I think of the misery of being left in London at this season, because, were it not for the recollection of it, I should have yielded to the wishes of our senators that I should have presented the address of the University to the Queen.

Scenes give me pleasure, but scenes and places also torture me more than words can express. Speaking of scenes, we were within sight of Ruberslaw. I saw it from Old Melrose, where I spent two days. Had I thought that your girls were at home, I should have pushed on.

My stomach is still my great evil, and makes me unhappy and full of forebodings. Exercise and starving, I am confident, are my only cure. But on this very occasion, as the day declined,

* Alluding to the recent death of his wife.

and as I had thought that I had successfully shirked my dinner, there came down a footman with a tray containing every article of a sumptuous repast. Think of that, my old friend! under the tree, by the side of the clear running water, and the opposite rocks and trees tinged by the afternoon sun. Certainly, in the south of England, there is nothing like this. Dinners there are—tho' I hold not better than here—but in such a scene?—no, nothing like the Tweed.

* * * * *

Heaven be praised, Marion is stout and well. She looks as if she would survive me thirty years.

Yours, C. B.

SIR C. BELL TO HIS WIFE IN EDINBURGH.

28th August, 1837.
BURLINGTON HOTEL.

My principal business is finished, and I am just setting off with Alick to breakfast with the D——s at the Star and Garter, Richmond.

Yesterday was a strange day to me, driving alone in a post-chaise through all our old haunts—Acton, Willesden, Bushey, and Merry Hill. The day charming, blue skies, and green fields, and yellow roads. Every turn and course I knew by instinct—you never knew your whereabouts. Indeed, a melancholy day, a fading world, amidst all this sunshine. I shall call in Richmond Park

and see Grannie * and William Adam as I pass. I have plenty of patients to see on my return to town.

I found the good people at the Star very happy to see us—so highly complimentary as everybody is as to your C——'s looks!

Strange to look over these bright waters and blue distances, and to think what we have seen. Now to get away. Many temptations to stay. . . . . I hope to see you on Monday night.

* * * * *

SIR C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,
3rd September, 1837.

MY DEAR JOHN,

I am driven different ways, and accomplish nothing. On Thursday we go to Corehouse, and I am under engagement to go to Galloway and the North. I was in London when your letter came here. I went and returned within the week. That was but a melancholy journey. I lodged at the Burlington Hotel, near my old place of residence, and found no comfort but in incessant activity. Had I received your letter, I would have been tempted to come over the Carter,† but I was feverish, and thought it right to come down by sea. I shall bring my books and papers and sit beside you for a few days—not that I have

* Mrs. Loch.

† Carter Fells—high hills on the road to Edinburgh.

lost my delight in the angle! But I must task myself—I fear to the last.

About the time you were on the Tweed I was there, and raised five salmon or grilse. Three I played for twenty minutes, and brought home—none! Could we not meet on the Tweed and have a day, and afterwards go home with you? No journey is more sweet to me than along the Leader by the new road. . . . .

My Lord Cockburn I meet, who is still "Cockie." The Jeffreys and Listers keep my wife in play. We dine with them at Ratho to-morrow, with Jeffrey and Sir J. Dalrymple on Tuesday, and next day we (the College of Surgeons) give a public dinner to Sir Astley Cooper; indeed, he and Lady Cooper being here has *taigled* me very much. We had them to dinner, and expected them to have lived with us.

Sir Astley wishes me to be Queen's Surgeon for Scotland. . . . . It shows, at least, good feeling on his part.

Ever, dear John, yours,

CHARLES BELL.

1838.

SIR C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON, ESQ.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,

5th February, 1838.

MY DEAR JOHN,

Our weather wintry yet kindly too; and anything more splendid than the sunshine I have never seen—the sun streaming over the margin

of dark clouds upon the Castle and Old Town, while Princes Street is bright and warm. I have not lost my delight in viewing the different scenes of our romantic town. Oh that your fortune had cast you here!

* * *

15th May.

We are engaged in examinations previous to granting degrees, and first of all in Latin; and as I hate all false pretences, I every morning read diligently at my old school books; and commencing in duty, I proceed with a quiet pleasure I have not known for many a day. It is an unambitious dreamy use of time that gives perfect rest.

The first swallow I have seen has just crossed the window. How I delight in our house—such an expanse of sky; and yesterday we had a noble thunderstorm. Nothing in the visible world is to me perfect but the landscape in the sky.

Have I told you of our pleasant recreations in the woods of Craigie Hall? In forty minutes from this door I am in the most beautiful scene imaginable, having an extent of river that affords every variety, a long cast in smooth and deep water, the ripple, the cascade and deep pool; and there I sit and sketch, or fish, in perfect solitude; God knows I am grateful!

Yesterday we dined with the Jeffreys; I had left nine yellow trout at their door, and their surprise mortified me!

The lord gives himself most amiably to pleasant society. We had the usual party, and the

solicitor (Rutherford), fresh from town. He, by-the-by, has taken a palace six miles from Edinburgh. Jeffrey was animated in its description. You have many reasons to be much here.

Ever yours, C. BELL.

18*th May.*

MY DEAR JOHN,

I have been at the Tweed and caught a trout that was estimated in sterling value at the market place as worth a salmon of sixteen pounds! And who was my companion? Why, Wilson,* my brother professor.

His upper half was all that was visible—a keen fisher—up to the basket. But I did credit to my master in the gentle art—my three trout outweighed his dozen. We had a great deal of curious conversation. He is full of thought and feeling—dreams strange dreams. I was thoughtless—not ungenerous—enough to allude to that most tearful conclusion to the second book of the Æneid, which brought the account of a dream, equal, I should say, to the Vision of Mirza—a barren and interminable heath, and a voice calling him to judgment; and at last he saw his wife and children, and hoped they would give testimony for him, but they came forward and looked at him, but spake not, and vanished.

How much my companion liked his I can only infer from his coming two days after to ask me to take a tour of three days' fishing. . . . .

* Christopher North.

I have pleasure in thinking I have reconciled him to his old pastime, which, since the death of his wife, he had foregone.*

Your affectionate

C. BELL.

AINSLIE PLACE, 28*th July*, 1838.

MY DEAR JOHN,

Often have I thought of writing to you, and always when most happy, and I deem this the test of friendship. When we were at Loch Katrine I thought daily of writing to you, and now I am upon the eve of setting off again.

Wednesday is our "*capping*" day, after which I consider myself free. We shall then make stages westward to Touch, to visit the Sandfords; to the Ross; Cardross, Mr. Erskine's; join the Jeffreys at Strachur, and then to Loch Awe. I have had invitations to the Tweed, which they say is full of fish, but I have been locked up with these young doctors, 165 having offered themselves for examination. When we return from the Highlands we shall find Edinburgh a desert, and then I shall expect an invitation from you.

* From *Blackwood's Magazine*, June, 1838:—"Now for a fish. Let's show the heaviest salmon in the Tweed. Let's put on a bigger and a brighter Professor. Would that Sir Charles Bell were here, who excels in all he tries—artist, anatomist, angler of the first water; in science a discoverer, yet, like all men of genius whom we have known, simple in his manners as if he were an amiable obscure—moreover, a delightful companion, the associate of Sir Humphry, and the beloved of Babington, that we might yield to him the precedence, and see a fish taken in perfection."

I went with you step for step at Chenies, and longed to go to the little inn and comfort you with a *noggin.* How thankful I ought to be for the time spent there—that pretty valley—the settled peace of that village, and the green alleys. But come, to be wise we must teach ourselves to value what we have, and I never lose the sense of the comparative rest to my weary feet here,—compared with that slippery position in London, where you must run to stand still, like the criminal in the treadmill—and the great privilege of such a drive to the seaside as we had to-night, and these splendid evening views, sitting with a book in my hand.

I trust you are as happy as the misfortunes we are heir to will permit. God bless and prosper you and yours.

Ever yours,
CHARLES BELL.

SIR C. BELL TO HIS WIFE.

KINFAUNS CASTLE,
September, 1838.

* * * * * *

How diverting these changes of scene are. This morning I lived a kind of Robinson Crusoe life, aboard a boat on the troubled waters of the Tay, struggling with a salmon for full half an hour, and when we went home helping ourselves. Here I have been treated like a prince, served at dinner, in the place of honour, by six unnecessary servants—made much of by the young ladies in these

superb rooms—sung to by the sweetest voices, amidst objects of taste and Italian pictures.

* * * * *

The good lord's workshop is a curious place, being a long room full of mechanical contrivances and tricks—a Merlin repository.

SIR C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON, ESQ., IN LONDON.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,

3rd December, 1838.

MY DEAR JOHN,

You must be lonely, busy, and yet not in the stirring business of the session, so I write in hopes of changing your dull reflections to gayer scenes. I am, however, in the midst of my lectures, and not altogether pleased, having much to make me angry were I not hardened by experience.

But I meant to let a ray into your dark chamber. When I had resigned all thoughts of woods and streams, and was engaged with my introductory lecture, there came a long packet, longer than my arm, thicker than my thigh, which being unrolled, proved to be a new and most beautiful fishing-rod, sent me from the *Haining*. On the third day of my lecture—still desirous of banishing all boyish thoughts—I received a letter franked *Douro*. It felt like a long narrative of a case, and soft, as if containing a large fee in English notes. It proved to be a collection of salmon-flies. If it had come a fortnight sooner, I might have ejaculated with Sam Weller, "What sport we shall have!"—N.B. They were slight varieties of that fly

you sent down the water to me—beautifully dressed with appended *bobs*, by Dr. Hume.

Yes! I do think that piece of water from the bridge to Lord Lothian's is perfection for a long cast.

Suppose that the letters I have of late written to you had not been put in the fire, and that any one were to peruse them, they would imagine your friend to be some idle fellow, or "mere fisher or shooter."

Why should I talk to you of my cases? grievous diseases, horrid tic, operations, peevish consultants; more than that, you should cool me down with "bills" and law "opinions?" We must lean upon each other, supported and cushioned, and relax from our individual cares and anxieties.

We have had charming weather; some days the splendour of the town is surpassing; the low sun, the deep shadows, and brilliant and partial illuminations, produce great splendour. I cannot help being struck with the singular and picturesque effect.

* * * * *

God mend us all, for life is a difficult game. These same little cords are not easily broken that erst held Gulliver.

Give me a short note first to say how you breathe.

Ever affectionately yours,

CHARLES BELL.

1839.

SIR C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON, ESQ.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,
17th January, 1839.

MY DEAR JOHN,

I must not let you go out of Scotland without saying "Good-bye." You have enjoyed your month of idleness. But my fear is, that on returning to London, you may think yourself called upon to plunge into that uninterrupted labour which you were wont to do. Believe me, these sudden transitions are very dangerous, and we are not what we were.

As of late years I do not go to the play, and especially to tragedy, so have I eyed this last volume of Sir Walter's life with a presentiment of suffering, and I have not read it till now, and the effect is as I expected—a deep sense of misery; yet common sense forbids this, for his life was prosperous. He seemed especially constituted for enjoyment, and his death was calm and with honour.

I have a note signifying the death of the last Miss Wood this morning. I have no livelier recollection of kindness to me as a child out of my own family than that of these lively romping girls. Edinburgh is in strange contrast to London in this respect: the very many deaths that are announced; the frequent calls for sympathy. May not the feelings expand better here? I was in love with that Miss H., whose *hearse is passing!*

When I sum up what I have done since coming to Scotland, I do not think that I should be ashamed of myself, and yet I have had some delightfully idle days. Men waste their lives from want of method. I am convinced that I am doing good to *mankind* (don't laugh at me) by my lectures, and on the whole, tho' fatiguing, they are pleasant to me.

There is a *life* of your humble servant publishing in London, and the writer—or rather, publisher—asks for a portrait! *

Give my kindest love to all the girls. So manage that we all meet on the river-side in health, and make your ancient friend as happy as the day is long.

Believe me, I shall think of you in your dark abode, as I have enjoyed the thoughts of your present happiness.

Ever, dear John, yours affectionately,

C. BELL.

SIR C. BELL TO HIS WIFE IN LONDON.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,

24th April, 1839.

* * * * *

I have just had your letter, and I see you are

* There never was a really good portrait taken of Charles Bell. It seemed impossible to fix on canvas the varying expression which was one of his great charms. He could scarcely be called handsome, but his noble brow, his benevolent, playful smile, and a certain gracefulness in the carriage of his head, and in all his movements, were very attractive. No one could see him without feeling he was no ordinary man.

getting tired! But I am not going to let you come down till you have seen everybody and everything. Let me hear of your being everywhere, and all your remarks, then you will enjoy the quiet of this pleasant house—for quiet it must be, and nothing quiets me so much as the view from our windows. We have had delightful weather. There is nothing more beautiful than our view.* The snow is still on the distance. I shall *flit* on Tuesday into our summer quarters, and locate myself and books in the dining-room.

27th.

. . . . I have your letter this morning—better than trouts. Our weather is splendid. I have got rid of my cold, and I have been very much engaged with patients—fully as much as I desire. So much so, indeed, as to prevent all regular reading and writing.

I made two little sketches, which were presently carried off—perhaps by the dog—some dog. . . . . If you see Sir Astley, tell him I thought much of him and Coleman yesterday, having been requested by the Highland Society to examine the veterinary pupils. Oh what a falling off from the jolly nights we had then! We had them to coffee, after examination.

* His niece once asked him whether he did not regret having exchanged London for Edinburgh. He answered, emphatically, "Never! But," he said, taking her to the window, "look there and judge for yourself."

I have been reading all sorts of books, lives, and travels, carrying them all on together. I go to the water-side to make me sleep.

1st May.

MY DEAR PET,

This morning I came in from the Whitadder, having been away one entire day. I spent yesterday most pleasantly among the hills—scene wild, bare, and lumpish, with dells, and rocks, and deep pools, where lie that which I "went for to see." The evening was falling, and, I assure you, it was very romantic. I was up at five o'clock; came in fifty miles; have been round all the new town on foot—and this the first of May, a truly hot summer day, and I am very tired. In my round I called to see your picture. I am not so well pleased with it as I expected.

You talk of coming down twelve days hence. Why, it is not worth the going for!! Now, dear love, don't hurry on my account, for you see how I can rub on; and the certainty that you are well and enjoying the time, is enough of happiness for me.

SIR C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON, ESQ.

11th July, 1839.

MY DEAR JOHN,

Your girls have passed through without my seeing them, which is to me quite unnatural.

I shall at length want one of those large wood

knives which Sir Walter Scott gave to you, for I am about to build a cottage under the shadow of Corstorphine Hill, among the wood, and looking down on our beautiful Forth, and west away in that fine Strath. So, when we meet, you may talk of your woodcraft with all sympathy from your old friend. And I have got one black dog, and I mean to have a greyhound, and so to have my play out for the few years that remain to me.* My friends think that this new object will subdue my love of the waters. But they are mistaken. Within four-and-twenty hours I shall be up to the middle in the Clyde! When I am fishing with my nephews—who, happily, are as fond of the sport as I am, and whom Marion sends to pull me out of the water—they say, when I have caught a fish, I still continue to call out, "John! John! I have him!" which sentiment I mean as a concluding compliment from your affectionate friend.

You understand that it is a corner of the Clermiston estate which Jeffrey gives me?

C. B.

18th August.

MY DEAR JOHN,

When there is fishing in prospect, I can sleep on the *lid of a chest.* I am really in a provoking situation. I had hoped that my receipts from the University would have enabled me to accom-

* This bright dream was often talked of, but never carried out.

plish a great work on anatomy—a design which was innermost at my heart when coming here. But I am obliged to attend to business, and at this season parties drop into Edinburgh for consultation at times when I could wish to be in the country, and I never move without having to calculate what I have lost as well as what I have spent; and then I upbraid myself for extravagance.

Can you feel the interest I do in the new life of Sir H. Davy? It shows him a most amiable and affectionate man, and full of speculation and enjoyment—now a fish, and now a profound and religious sentiment. Ill-written lives are the best. Little vanities and weaknesses come out, which better sense and better taste would shrink from detailing. Sir H. Davy's life puts me in mind of many things, both bitter and sweet—occasions gone; friends lost; time mis-spent; character misunderstood!

There is a depth of feeling consequent on such changes of domicile as I have had. I came here in a state of excitement, having few to sympathize with me, and now dull London begins to acquire an interest in the heart from what one has suffered in it.

Yours affectionately,

C. B.

SIR C. BELL TO HIS WIFE.

THE HAINING, 13*th October*, 1839.

. . . . I came here pleasantly reading all the way, thinking, feeling, and speculating. These lives of men whom we have known are full of interest. You must read what Sir Thomas Lawrence says of the last days of the poor Princess Charlotte. I wish our Queen as good a husband. But Sir Thomas was no man of genius. On entering Rome, his first letter contains a list of his own works.

As I passed the Tweed, it was so dark and drumly that I do not go there to-morrow, but below the house here to the Ettrick, so be you at rest on that score.

My danger here is excess of good living, but I am going to bed as cool as a fish!

Tuesday.

I was all the forenoon up the water; rode on a grey pony. I must have one, for it shakes my sides well. Rather too many attendants—major domo, keeper, and underkeeper. No salmon, but the views delightful. I have made some little sketches.

This is a charming place,* and here I shall remain. I have been of some use to my friend, and may be of more. I wish you saw the view which breaks upon me when I open my window in the morning; your heart would dance with the

* The seat of Pringle, of Hayning.

quivering waters of the Lake. I have had nothing wrong, but *dreaming* that I lost you in the streets of London.

C. B.

18*th.*

. . . . Too many temptations here for a wearied fisher. This is a splendid place. I have nothing to say but of bright realities and day dreams, bright days, bright water (alas!), and all bright and contented in my own breast, and thankful for the means and capacity of enjoyment.

CHAPTER XX.

Paris—Nice to Genoa—Entering Rome—John Bell's Grave—The Vatican—Frascati—St. Spirito—Sight-seeing at Rome—Perugia—Bologna—Home.

1840.

SIR C. BELL TO HIS WIFE.

SIR JOHN FIFE'S, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

4th January, 1840.

. . . . Now I have a little rest, for since the day after Waterloo I have not been so busy, and without sleep!

Yesterday we started at seven o'clock, and came home at one in the morning, having changed horses three times. This morning I had breakfast at six o'clock, and went off in a different direction; I have seen ten patients, one of them an old dying woman, to whom I could not be of the slightest service. However, I hope I have been of use to others, and to some have given comfort. . . .

In the spring of this year Charles Bell made a short tour to Rome, and from the moment he left England, he began his "Italian Journal." But his habit of depicting his impressions of scenery and pictures, more by rapid and masterly water-colour sketches than in written language, makes it unavailable unless in facsimile. A few extracts, therefore, are all that can be given.

May 8, 1840. *Paris.*—Visited hospitals, museums, &c., with young George.*

Commemoration of Napoleon's birthday. Valet de place in Hotel Mirabeau had much to say of him. He described him, stooping forward and beating his knees with delight, on seeing his great army march from the Place Carrousel to Russia. "A little man," Joseph said, "plainly dressed, in the midst of superb generals."

May 14.—Heaven be praised, I am out of the celebrated City of Paris! All the people, except the postillions, are good-natured and kind. The cheerful, sweet expression of the ladies, and their graceful amenity have alone hitherto made me call it "La belle France." . . . .

Vetturino, from Nice to Genoa. Four days of happiness, beautiful weather, much walking and sketching. Tomaso said, "Monsieur dessine toujours."

(Sketch of a fisherman.) I see they cast into the sea as we do into a river. What would dear Dr. Babington have said to these "brothers of the angle"?

What a beggar I have missed. How he threw his rags about his head and shoulders.

Just as I was about to say that I have been as

* George J. Bell, Junr., writes to his father from "Paris, Mai 21, 1840. The way in which Roux and Petit received him was most amusing. When he put his card into his hand, it was, 'Ah, Sharley Bell. C'est lui-même,' upon which all the students were gathered round, and the ward resounded with 'Sharley Bell.' He was, of course, much pleased."

much pleased with the shores of Loch Fyne on a summer day, with rocks and birch woods, and pellochs sporting, a turn of the mountain opened to us a series of extensive bays, terminating in the head of land off which is Genoa. . . . . Looking up the valleys through which these rivers form the winter-flood (now a rill), the view is enchanting. On the face of the hill shoot up spires and groups of houses: far among the woods over all rise like crystals the snow-covered mountains, towards Turin. In the afternoon the light streams down these vallies, lighting up the white sails of the vessels which lie in the bay. An invalid might live and die here. . . . .

27th May, 1840.

God forgive me! I sit on a velvet cushion in an arm-chair of gold; before me a gallery of ancient architecture; a fountain plays from a marble lion; orange trees and silk curtains moderate the light. I am in Genova la superba. I look into the harbour, crowded with strange rigging, and flags new to us. Arches, bell-towers, churches, form the sky-line. Note how these silken curtains float into the room, wafted by this soft air.

* * * * *

In a church I must not forget the music. The deep voice of men, and the responses taken up by the voices of boys. Those beautiful old psalm tunes, like the pictures, must have belonged to an age of genius.

How fine these kneeling figures and beggars

creep about the door, squalid, distorted, strange, all in dumb show. I must have that fellow who counts his beads and crosses himself so pathetically, and takes his soldo from the good old woman. There is the subject I have been dreaming of all my days. How perfect the figure of the young women in their veils, as they kneel. And the Contadino stoops on his knee and crosses himself, with as deep devotion and as picturesque effect.

The Italian painter has every advantage; such figures in the churches, of monks, mendicants, fine women, ragged boys, all in supplication. What studies!—and, I must say, what touching scenes.

2nd June.

Lay long in the steamboat off shore. Sweet singers alongside. The coast of Italy fast receding, and the day declining. Attempted sleeping in the "*niche,*" but this utterly impossible. Lay on the deck—break of day and first peep of the sun over the Apennines very striking—a long quiet time. Nobody but the Capuchin friar—a capital figure—in the gloom; his head covered with his cowl; his black beard sticks out curiously. (Sketch).

3rd June.

Entering Rome. Must I give my first impressions? Well! sixteen miles from Rome, on changing horses, I had the first view. There was a slater at work on the top of a house; I mounted the ladder, and saw—Rome! The

setting sun shining brightly on the Dome and higher buildings. It was merely pleasing pretty; for, appearing only four or five miles off, and just rising from the line of a hill, I was deceived—for the distance was sixteen miles—a long stage. I saw bright, sparkling houses, like the first view of a town in England. The slater's delight in observing me was diverting—entering fully into my enthusiasm and assuring me it was "Roma." The most common, ragged fellow feels this. And well he may; for it would really appear that all was for the people. After this, I had nothing but disappointment. Hill after hill intervened, and we entered the Porta Cavalleggieri by the light of fireflies. We were kept some time at the Guard, and heard the bell of St. Peter's booming over our heads as never bell sounded to my ears before, and never will again.

4th June.

Went to poor John's grave.* The Pyramid of Cestius attracts you from a distance. A plain stone marks the place as you enter the ancient reformed burying ground. A single antique column is between the enclosure and the pyramid. Remembering old times, a fitting resting-place.

* * * * *

10th June.

At length a day of Raffaelle in the Vatican.

* Sir J. Simpson visited the grave in 1869, and had the stone repaired, as a mark of his admiration of John Bell's professional merits.

It is impossible, I mean, to give an idea of their effects. What most? The female heads. What next? The Pope's. The heads, the beards, the colouring, not to be surpassed. . . . . Man appears a superb creature in the Vatican.

Frascati. Came out from Rome boiling with heat. As we ascended the hill it became cool, then dark. Threaded the town of Frascati, towards the other side, and came back here to the Villa Taverna—singular scene and reception! Next day, Mrs. Knight,* the young ladies, and Lady Davy set off with us towards Monte Porzio, Camaldoli, Tusculum. . . . No trees? Magnificent; the Alpine Pine and Evergreen Oak. Long, intricate roads in the woods, and many a splendid contrast in emerging from them. The plains, the distance, enticing valleys leading to mountains—all under the blue sky of Italy. Cicero's villa a mass of conglomerated ruins. He must have looked to ungrateful Rome and, southward, to the wildest part of the Apennines. On the close of day, we came down on the Villa Aldobrandini, &c. We have passed a day ever to be remembered.

* * * * *

SIR C. BELL TO ALEXANDER SHAW, ESQ.

PALAZZO MIGNANELLI, ROME,
18*th June*, 1840.

MY DEAR ALIC, AND BEST FRIEND,

This is my first letter—the first I have written

* Sister of the Hon. George Winn.

to anybody; for, unless I am to copy from my note-book all my little scraps, I know not anything worthy of the date from which I write.

We are in health. We have enjoyed much. I have never had the pencil out of my hand. We have met friends everywhere—excellent friends. We are now under the same roof, in the same palace, with a family* who, I believe, would serve us on their knees. I found, in the steamboat between Genoa and Civita-Vecchia, a gentleman who would hardly let me use my own hands and feet!—certainly not my tongue; and when I went to bed, he popped his head into my berth, "Have you got a night-shirt?"

In addition, I have not failed to visit the hospitals, and to put the medical men into requisition, when necessary. This I have made a matter of duty. But, good Lord! how stupid and *fade* all this is. However, I yesterday visited the St. Spirito, and the collection of preparations—excellent, beautiful. The work of Flajani. But I have in all my course found it impossible to obtain one word of commendation of one man from another! There is, in fact, nothing doing in the way of improvement. It is a queer sensation to look out of the hospital into the Tiber!

Once more, I find Marion has gone out with Lady Davy; and here I am, with an old woman, in a palace—having nine rooms to range in, and

* The Ingrams.

nobody to talk with but you. I hope you won't think of tearing off my sketches from my book? for in this way I proceed. My note-book is a drawing-book; and sometimes a drawing, and sometimes a note, serves for a memorial hereafter. Oh that you or I had been rich enough, that we could have travelled together! Last night, the Coliseum by moonlight. Sun just down. Moon just up. Then a drive through the streets, the Forum, the Capitol. Then these streets of palaces, dark below, grated windows; above, the rich cornices, some by Michael Angelo, and the light of candles streaming through crimson and white—I do assure you, a romantic life. But it is impossible I should tell you the hundredth part of what I have seen. Even to-day I have seen the Pope, with cardinals, bishops, prelates from all parts, not only of those European countries, but from Armenia, Egypt, Greece, Circassia, and the farthest Ind, not forgetting the Irish, who are the most splendid figures of a procession. Then churches, palaces, ancient and modern Rome. Oh! I have toiled like a galley-slave! I shall enrich my book on Expression beyond belief. Noses, beards,—especially beards,—lips, throats, demoniacs, and the Lord knows how much,—besides the whole art of kissing, and blowing kisses.

19*th*.

To-day I have resisted all temptation to move, and now all agree that, as the Sirocco blows, we

must keep the house, and shut the windows, and *bar them.* It blows violently, and makes everything dance and *bang* in this house, where I can walk sixty paces without a turn. I consider Rome as finished. I might stay a month, a year, and then, like many, make it my permanent home. N.B. Old men live to a very great age at Rome. My impressions are as many and as strong as I can carry away or hope to retain. I really believe that much longer stay would weaken them. We have also been at Frascati, and made a giro of the mountain to Tusculum.

Now, if I can spare some time in Florence, I think I shall be rich in illustrations; and certainly, by all accounts here, we have seen Italy and Rome to great advantage compared with our countrymen who spend the winter here, and fly at the approach of fine weather.

Italy is now and has been beautifully green and luxuriant beyond England. And the pictures, especially the frescoes, are not seen in winter; they require the blaze of a summer sun.

I am writing badly, for, from writing my notes, I have got into the habit of writing thus. I shall bring home some sketches of contadini, peasants, beggars, and monks. But you will hardly believe how fast the time goes. And really, with all her superlative merit, your sister does drive me about rarely. I should like to go to Venice; but, if I find that we are expensive here, when accounts come in, why, we shall cut off

Venice, and take the nearest road over the Alps. Write to us at Florence; we must stay some time there, at all events.

Will it be in your power to see us in Scotland this autumn? It is the pleasantest time of the year. I have no more anxious desire than to hear you are prospering. Be bold. You are well entitled to take more upon you than you have hitherto done. I shall leave a corner for Marion.

Adieu. Your affectionate

C. BELL.

PERUGIA, *4th July*, 1840.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

You will not believe me when I say this is the first day of rest I have had for a month past! As to Rome,—there I was driven as a slave,—rode upon like one of the Galeotti. Heat, sleep, palaces, churches, sketching, drawing, and the oppressive but kind interference of friends, made it a month of labour, excitement, delight, and disappointment. For who could *do* Rome in a month! We must conceal that we have had the bad taste, the folly, or the necessity of leaving it so soon. I have filled two books—one with Italy, and one with Rome, and you must look them over some night to know how we have been employed.

Last night we mounted here, with the help of oxen, and in the dark for an hour and a half, passing ancient walls and gates, seen in the declining day; and here we are imprisoned by heat, shutting out the smallest beam of light as an enemy

to all exertion. We have travelled the last two days through the centre of Italy—rich, beautiful, infinitely varied. Here we rest in what appears at first a palace—lofty rooms, painted ceilings,—and so it has always been; but a nearer inspection shows tarnished gold, broken furniture, and walls dilapidated, conveying the impression of better times gone by, a melancholy and depressing feeling accompanying you in all sights. But in the splendid prospect, out of doors! . . . .

We are rather oddly situated here. To leave it we must start at three o'clock in the morning, or fall upon bad inns and dangerous sleeping-places. So we must rest a day and a night, or not at all.

FLORENCE, *8th.*

All well. Anxious now to get to the North, and to be at home. I shall try hard to be at the *Capping;* but we are here in a net. I hope you have all your *bodies* about you, and that you are very happy.

Ever your affectionate

C. B.

CHARLES BELL TO J. RICHARDSON.

BOLOGNA, 15*th July*, 1840.

MY DEAR JOHN,

If you need an apology for not writing to you sooner, you have it in this, that I have written only one letter since I left England. In truth, I have been in a state of activity and excitement or travelling continually. All the time at Rome,

where we spent a month, I laboured continually, very angry with myself that I had not read more in preparation for so great an opportunity. But again I was busy up to the time of starting.

To-day has been like all our days. We drove in at the decline of day, just in time to see a church or two and enjoy tea after a fatiguing day in passing the Apennines. I wrote to the Professors, my usual resource, and this morning had a *levée,* and visited the Collection of Comparative Anatomy and Surgical Pathology. From that we went to the Acad. dell' Belle Arte. I spent some hours seeking for examples of *expression.* I have just finished my notes, and after dinner we shall drive to see the Certosa, which I understand is a church and cemetery, which will bring us acquainted with the departed of Bologna.

The three last days we have been travelling from Florence among the Apennines—the scenes, I believe, as picturesque, and the dangers as great as passing the Alps,—one or two heights dangerous from the strength of the wind. On one occasion we came laughing over the lee, holding our garments, until we came to a soldier guarding a dead body. The man had been thrown down and killed by the power of the wind three hours before.

Near Poggioli I saw . . . .

Dear John, I was interrupted by a call to dinner—everything good—boiled beef, mutton, Bologna sausages, dessert, fruit—and? music! How

it opens the cells of memory! and with me you and yours are not forgotten. We have lived thirty years of our best years together, working, but always together in the hours of enjoyment; and if you knew how much I loved your wife you would love me *still better*. This music is strange and most charming—the opera music of Bellini and Rossini, by three fiddlers—how strange!

I think I would have made a good *lord!* Observe, I have just been schooling our man Ferdinand that he must not call me My lord. I do so enjoy pictures, fruit, and music!

But I must tell you how I have twinges, and that I could crawl on my knees to be honestly at my own work, at my own fireside, and that I would have bolted and run home, had not hundreds of miles been intervening.

You would not believe the kindness and attention we have met with. I am very poor, but I have gained that; and Marion is made so much of; and, God be praised, we are both well and capable of enjoyment, and love our friends. Tell Hope that her letter was quite a cordial.

Our course is now Modena, Parma, Milan. We cross the Splugen, come down on the Rhine at Basle, and so home.

Ever, dear John, your affectionate

CHARLES BELL.

P.S.—We met Sir Frederick Adam at Florence. He drove us about, showing us all the beauties

from Vallombrosa to the heights of Ficsole—no, not to Vallombrosa, but towards it.

Modena very dull,—the palace large, handsome, empty, dull,—the town like a deserted place,—few pictures for one returning from the South.

Shall we meet at Kirklands? And shall we have a thorough cooling in the water?

Parma, Piacenza, Lodi, Milan, for I find I am carrying on my own letter. This is wearisome and flat,—a repetition of little beauties till they fatigue.

Last night we slept at a country inn, and on the decline of day had a pleasant walk among the vineyards. We found in a retired place that the farmer had quoted both Virgil and Horace on his gate in favour of him who labours his own field and kills his own mutton! We look forward to the grander beauties of the Pass of the Splugen; I have got a new sketch-book on purpose; it will be the third I have filled. It will be cruel in Hope to tear out a leaf, and yet she shall be welcome. I must have a day with you before we go home, for on our return people will expect me to be sober and industrious. Till then Heaven bless you and yours.

C. BELL.

Marion's affectionate regards.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,
October, 1840.

MY DEAR JOHN,

I have your kind letter this morning. I have

been kept unusually close to this from duty to patients, until now that I am startled by the approach of winter, or what is the same thing to me, of the Classes.

I am agreeably employed in introducing my Italian notes into a new edition of my "Anatomy of Expression"; indeed, I am writing the book anew.

If we go to any of the Southern waters I shall be obliged to locate an Irish family of patients at Torsaunce or St. Boswell's!!! Separate we cannot! Still I look wistfully down on our river. As to our meeting, I fear we must leave it to fortune.

But ever yours,

C. BELL.

CHAPTER XXI.

Airthry—"The Burn"—George's Blindness—Hooton—Sir H. Fleetwood—Death of a Favourite Pupil—Anxieties—Serious attack of Illness when about to leave Home—Sufferings at Manchester—Last Letter to his Brother—Hallow Park—Walk to the Churchyard—A Sweet "Resting-place"—The Last Evening—Sudden Death.

1841—42.

C. BELL TO J. RICHARDSON.

AINSLIE PLACE,
11th June, 1841.

MY DEAR JOHN,

I think I have at some time said that I think most of you and yours when by the waters, and the trees are *soughing*, and the birds singing. We have just returned from Airthry (Lord Abercrombie's); and I had twelve hours on the Teith with two keepers at my tail—confound them. And, indeed, there were some folk who conceived me ripe for Bedlam to attempt fishing in a water clear as glass, and not a foot deep, with the blue ether overhead. But with my fine tackle and a small fly I had him—played and landed him! Hooked another; played him for ten minutes, when he ran my *pirn* off to the end of my line, and then off he went at forty yards. The weight

of the long line in the water allowed him to fling up and snap the fine gut. They were only large sea-trout. However, I came home with honours. We dined yesterday with the Murrays, Lord John Hay, and Lord Dunfermline. . . . .

The weather here has been and still is beautiful, but I become uneasy on seeing the sun set so far north. And, good heavens! how the years roll on, dear John, more and more rapidly and fearfully, and we still the same trifling creatures, unsteady in purpose, unsettled in opinion—and see how our old friends depart. Sir Astley's death seems to cut me off from the London profession; now poor Wilkie—and what a death and burial!

Love to my dear friends. I think with pleasure of sleeping under the same roof with them. Marion sends her love.

Always affectionately theirs and yours,

C. BELL.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,
5th July, 1841.

DEAR JOHN,

I received your pleasant epistle one hundred miles north of this.* I wish we could travel

* At "The Burn," Major McInroy's. Of this visit Mrs. McInroy wrote, years afterwards, "Well do I remember the morning when Sir Charles started off on the picturesque 'Jacky,' in fishing gear, for a trip up the Glenesk to fish down the river, a subject, could he have sketched himself, worthy of his own pencil. No schoolboy could have had the air of more thorough enjoyment as he waved his fishing-rod over his head in bidding us adieu for the day.

"How I wish that memory could clothe in words all I so strongly

together as once we did when you were in search of a home in Scotland. You would be as much surprised as I have been in visiting the north-east of Scotland. It is England beautified by the distant mountains of the Grampians. . . . .

On the 15th of this month I shall be locked up with our examinations, and this year I cannot run away as I did last. But it will go hard with me if I cannot bolt by the Jedburgh coach and see you all on the 15th, or before our "capping day," which is the first of August. Unfortunately I have to make a speech, giving advice to the boys; and I find any subject of anxiety affect me as when I mount a hill.

Notwithstanding, when I went to "The Burn," I was on the water a quarter before three o'clock in the morning. So that I am the same old fool, and will be—as poor Lynn was wont to say—the boy on crutches. But as in that, so in better things, for I make myself busy; moreover, it may well assure you how truly and constantly I am, dear John, your and yours,

C. BELL.

TO THE SAME.

UNIVERSITY,
21*st July*, 1841.

DEAR JOHN,

We are like men on a chess-board, and I a pawn checked in every direction.

feel in remembrance of dear Sir Charles. His gentle kindness was so touching, and that look of fun, which he occasionally put on, was so irresistible."

In the days I expected to have spent with you Jeffrey was ill; and then Geo. Jos. took a violent inflammation in his eye,* which required me to be with him the whole day, and many days. I am now engaged with our examinations until the 2nd; then, again, a knight stops the pawn again, for Charles Shaw brings down a wife; and can I be away when everybody else is gone?

* * * * *

I long to be with you and dear Hope—I long for old friends. My relations here, tho' good and affectionate, are all young, and I feel myself not so. . . . . Here is arrived good Alick Shaw, whose talk puts one in mind of old times. I have had a harassing life. In the meantime, adieu, and believe me your affectionate friend,

C. BELL.

SIR CHARLES BELL TO HIS WIFE.

HOOTON, CHESHIRE,
8th August, 1841.

. . . . I rose this morning to have a long walk in these beautiful woods, but still it rains—it rains. I feel this a strange banishment, while Charles Shaw is with you in what the novelists call interesting circumstances.†

To-morrow morning I shall be at Rawcliffe, and I think take the steamboat from Fleetwood. Here the house is still asleep, but hitherto Sir T. has

* The beginning of blindness, which gradually increased on him till his death.

† His brother-in-law was on his marriage tour.

been much the better and greatly comforted by my coming.

I get wearied—exhausted by the sufferings of others. From this I must go to Belfast, and there I shall witness more misery. This day is as heavy as my spirits. The clouds descend on these beautiful woods weeping, and all chill and uncomfortable. I wish I had to go down to hear the jingle of your cups and saucers, and to see your dear face that never disappoints me!

I have had a walk amid interminable woods, sketching, until thoroughly convinced of my own incompetency. However, I have made a sketch for Alick of a gipsy. These woods dip down to the sands of the sea; and coming out from the dark screens, the sea is charming.

RAWCLIFFE, *9th August.*

Do you see where I am? I prefer this house to the place where I have been, and where Sir T. gets 700*l.* a-year for the rabbits in his park! I was here in time to take a walk in the garden—that garden where you saw Maister McDougal, the Andrew Fairservice of this part. He had very flattering recollections of your ladyship.

How came I here? I'll tell you. I was up at five this morning—breakfasted in the parlour overlooking Sir T.'s splendid park—the castle, the woods, the estuary, the distant town, making a glorious landscape illuminated by an early sun. I set off, as you may suppose, in good style—nine miles to the Ferry—crossed, and found my-

self cast away for two hours in Liverpool; the train not setting off nor the offices booking till half-past eight.

The railroad—detestable thing: I would rather travel in a cart. Well! I made my way to Fleetwood: the whole country collected at a regatta; but you know I find friends everywhere, and there I met the two Hornbys by accident. Think of that youth being the M.P.! So I was taken up by him, and in the splendid hotel had a chop, and walked about. Was introduced to Sir Hesketh Fleetwood, &c.; saw the boat-race—busy, bright, and splendid spectacle. These youths drove me seven miles; then I took post-chaise and came here, the setting sun glinting under the eyelids of the trees—beautiful.

The steamboat for Belfast does not go till Wednesday evening; however, to-morrow I shall spend profitably with this family and another coming to see me; and so you have it up to the moment of writing. And so adieu for the night.

All kindness here.

TO JOHN RICHARDSON, ESQ., IN LONDON.

KIRKLANDS,
8th September, 1841.

* * * * *

I received just now a great packet of letters, and said, "Well! I think there can be nothing to vex us," when, alas, one announced poor B—— T—— had perished—fell from a boat, I suppose,

in fishing.* Think of his poor mother. He had dedicated a Thesis to me, and one of my duties was to have written a letter to his mother congratulating.

I am sick. Great God! This life.

Your affectionate

C. BELL.

TO THE SAME.

MELROSE, Saturday,
18*th September*, 1841.

DEAR JOHN,

We have left your very dear family—as nice a group as ever made a kind farewell in porch or gateway.

After the most charming weather, we left in a dense fog, which is just beginning to clear away, for our ascent of the Gala.

I have fished peacefully—not in the pet when I caught nothing, and well pleased when day broke to try again. I have had more than usual pleasure in drawing. Moreover, I am sensibly in better health and strength. Marion ditto. I am more familiar with every dell and tree at Kirklands, and every pool. I am again the friend of your children, as of old, which is a great pleasure to me. Kirklands wants nothing but its master.

I go into Edinburgh very uneasy on my brother's account. . . . .

* A favourite pupil, whom he loved very dearly. B—— T—— was a universal favourite, a gay, happy spirit, all that could be wished in a son, a pupil, or a friend.

Then, again, what is he to do regarding his duties as clerk? His lectures, too, he can no longer read. . . . . I long to talk to you of these matters. We shall have University matters coming up (too).

But what do you think of public affairs? I have always conceived that a Queen and aristocratical Government was the natural condition to which this country tends, and the Whig Government was the exception to the rule. Yet what have our governors done, from Pitt to Melbourne, but studied how to raise taxes and gain votes? Circumstances have continually urged them. They neither looked forward nor retrospectively for their own characters. But adieu, ever dear John.

Yours, C. BELL.*

1842.

CHARLES BELL TO JOHN RICHARDSON.

6, AINSLIE PLACE,
4th April, 1842.

MY DEAR JOHN,

My lectures draw to a close, and I intend to be with you in London almost immediately. But I must consult you, and well I know you are a man to be trusted.

My old friends in London, being well aware that the measure proposed by Sir J. Graham will go

* He returned once more to Kirklands to be present at the marriage of Mr. Richardson's daughter Hope to Henry Reeve, Esq.

far to extinguish all privileges in our University, have been kindly considerate of my position.*

* * * * *

You see, then, dear John, that I have obtained the respect of my profession, and this is very soothing to my spirits. Should these prospects be realised, you see what a load would be off my shoulders, and that I might yet delve in my own garden?

Would you advise me to come up, or to delay? I am, as my friend has it, in nubibus, but, Heaven knows, not exalted, but in a mist, and you must think for me.

And now to other matters. Lady Scott dined here yesterday. We had the family from the "Burn." We had much talk of you and yours. You know I always *croaked* to you that in your calculations you forgot that the girls would marry. I feel alarmed that they yet divide your affections, and half withdraw you from the old country. But this must not be. I know where your heart is. Were you to live in the South, an old Scotch fiddle would make you *greet*. So take *tent* that we pass our remaining years where we drew breath. London is well for the young and expectant, or the dull old citizen who has passed the vigour of life on a stool, and who continues to

* Here follow proposals to him to allow his name to be included in the list of members of the Board of Health, &c., &c., as to which he asks his friend's advice, "making a certain income of at least 600*l.* per annum." The details are useless now, for before the end of the month he was *at rest*.

play with his thousands as a young coxcomb, whom Nature meant for a fool, lays his bets on the balls of a billiard-table. No, it won't do for us. We must waken with the rustling leaves at the window, and the fresh breeze off the woods and garden; and we must get learned in the weather, and watch the clouds and the water, while we have eyes to tie a knot and choose a fly.

Always yours, C. BELL.

TO THE SAME.

MANCHESTER, Sunday.
24th April.

MY DEAR JOHN,

So far are we in the bowels of the land. But I must tell you of my sufferings. You remember that, in our happy days, I was obliged to stop while you went on? That affection of my stomach has come to a dreadful extent, chaining me down.

We had determined to leave Edinburgh by the mail, places taken, money paid, chests and bags in the lobby, when I was seized with so severe a spasm, that I thought I must die. But next day all was arranged, leave taken, excuses made, servants on board-wages. I was tempted to try the Glasgow Railway, and so by steam to Liverpool.

I suffered occasionally, but got on to good quarters here, where I had an attack so prolonged that I called for death.

Is not this a sad affair? Some very material

change must be wrought by medicine, or my active life, at all events, is terminated.

If I reach you, we shall talk the matter over. But I fear I must retire to some corner—some cottage—for the fine season. It is my only hope, and then . . . . anxiety of mind brings on my pain, and it has of late come to that degree of severity that I wonder how the animal textures can sustain the tension.

Well, there are two pages of my miseries, and now for the bright side, for hope will break in when I am free from pain.

To-morrow we shall be in Cheltenham; there I must remain two days, and then by railroad we shall be in London, and hope to see you and yours in all the enjoyment of life, but no more comfortable dinners, with noggin and cozy talk.

Marion, God be praised, is well, and we are here most happy with C. Shaw and his wife. We shall be at Alick Shaw's for some days, here and there and everywhere.

Yours, CHARLES BELL.

TO HIS BROTHER.

MANCHESTER,
24th April, 1842.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

* * * * *

As to myself, I am no poorer in purse than when I left you, but as to health I have suffered beyond the power of words to express. I have

had one death-like attack of spasms, and much occasional pain, so that I am chained in activity.

I have had patients and fees here, but in assisting at an operation I thought I should have been obliged to lie and roll on the carpet, or leave the room in the midst of it. It was a lesson, and more than anything points to the course that I must follow out.

To-morrow we shall be in Cheltenham; there for two days, then to Malvern, and then to Henrietta Street.

Ever truly your and yours,

C. B.

On Wednesday, the 27th, they reached Hallow Park, Mrs. Holland's, near Worcester. During the night he was uneasy and low about himself, but next day seemed perfectly well. He walked on the terrace with his friends, admiring the lovely view. He went with his wife through the grounds, and got lightly over a gate to recover a sheet from his sketch book that had been blown away. The path led to the churchyard, where he sketched an old yew tree, some sheep feeding, the winding Severn, and some distant hills, and said to his wife, "This is a sweet spot—here I fain would rest till they come to take me away." He sat there long in a shady nook, drawing two children and a donkey; then they went slowly up the hill to the house, he looking with interest at every shrub they passed, observing on the different notes

of the birds, and gathering up their feathers to dress his flies.

At dinner Mr. Carden, the medical man of the neighbourhood, joined the party, and he was struck by the smallness of Sir Charles' appetite, and by his complaints of chilliness; when the ladies left he drew from him that he had suffered much the preceding evening, and from the symptoms he described he felt convinced that what he called spasms—"or something more," as he added in conclusion—was in fact angina pectoris.

Sir Charles, however, soon turned from his own illness, gave graphic sketches of the medical celebrities he had known, and touched on many subjects of interest. Once, after joining the ladies in the drawing-room, Mr. Carden perceived a deadly pallor steal over his face, and was on the point of rushing to his assistance when, his colour returning, he fancied he had been misled by his fears. They paused before an engraving of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," Sir Charles pointing out its several beauties; and when the evening closed he accompanied Mr. Carden to the door, looked at his horses, took his hand kindly, and wished him a hearty good night.

On retiring to rest, a severe attack came on, but his draught and warm applications relieved the pain, and he said to his wife, "Did you ever see me happier or better than I have been all this forenoon?"

The "evening reading" that night was the

23rd psalm; the last prayer, that beautiful one, "For that peace which the world cannot give," and then he sank into a deep and quiet sleep.

In the morning he awoke with a spasm, which he said was caused by changing his position. His wife was rising to drop his laudanum for him, but calling her to him, he laid his head on her shoulder, and there "rested."

Ere the medical man, hastily summoned, could reach Hallow, he had passed away.

A death like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal bliss.

They laid him to rest in the peaceful churchyard of Hallow, not far from the yew tree. A simple stone marks the spot, inscribed with his name, the dates of his birth and death, and the words:

"The pure in heart shall see God."

The inscription on the tablet afterwards placed in Hallow churchyard, in remembrance of Charles Bell, was written by his lifelong friend, Francis Jeffrey.*

* See Appendix.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
SIR CHARLES BELL,
WHO, AFTER UNFOLDING,
WITH UNRIVALLED SAGACITY, PATIENCE,
AND SUCCESS, THE WONDERFUL STRUCTURE OF
OUR MORTAL BODIES, ESTEEMED LIGHTLY
OF HIS GREATEST DISCOVERIES,
EXCEPT ONLY
AS THEY TENDED TO IMPRESS HIMSELF AND
OTHERS WITH A DEEPER SENSE
OF
THE INFINITE WISDOM AND INEFFABLE GOODNESS
OF THE
ALMIGHTY CREATOR.

HE WAS BORN AT EDINBURGH, 1774;
DIED, WHILE ON A VISIT OF FRIENDSHIP,
AT HALLOW PARK,
IN THIS PARISH, 1842;
AND LIES BURIED
IN THE ADJOINING CHURCHYARD.

The public expressions of sorrow at the time of Sir Charles Bell's sudden death showed that the appreciation of his character was deep and widespread, while the letters to his wife and brother disclosed feelings as if they mourned for a brother.

But a few simple lines to George from one who

had known Charles and him in the early days of their manhood,* and had been in their closest intimacy for many after years, will show how truly and earnestly he was regretted.

"A union is broken, the most perfect, I believe, that ever existed between two created beings. A spirit has returned to his Maker, with as little of earthly stain as is consistent with our fallen nature. Fine talents, strong and fervid affections, beautiful simplicity of mind, a high sense of all the duties belonging to the different *states* of the community, public and private, with a soul as simple as a child that falls asleep on the bosom of his mother."

George survived his brother little more than one year.

* Mrs. Morehead, wife of the Rev. R. Morehead, D.D., rector of Easington, to G. J. Bell. See Lord Jeffrey's Life.

LADY BELL'S RECOLLECTIONS.

TO THE EDITOR.

My Dear M—,

You ask for a sketch of my memories. To give them truly the egotism must be forgiven.

Long before I saw Charles Bell, I had listened to parts of his letters read by George to his wife and "auntie." Their love for him gave me an interest in his brave and buoyant spirit.

George was then much occupied with his brother's researches in the Nervous System, and in 1811, when we married, I found that it was the important object of his life. Hitherto I had heard nothing of medical science; but as he craved for sympathy, I happily could think of nerves merely as connecting threads, traced by his pencil and showing "design." He was very kindly sensitive on my account.

In these early days I scarcely comprehended his saying "I'll write a book that may be on your drawing-room table," but this was prophetic of "Animal Mechanics" and "The Hand." From

his habit of thinking for his lectures, these works came easily to him; and to me there was great happiness in noting down the words of his original thoughts. Even at odd times,—as after a pleasant party, or in the intervals of his "rounds," —he would clap his hands for me to come.

This was after the sad year 1827, when the death of my sister Barbara, the beloved wife of George, followed by the illness and death of John Shaw, are the events I dread to touch.

He had a strong affection for my brothers, John, and afterwards Alexander Shaw, his loving pupils and friends. I remember how, in following out his researches, they would sit poring over plates together, their arms over his neck, listening to him. The grief of Charles for John's death was dreadful. He would waken in the night weeping, "It is *imagination* that kills me."

It was after this great loss that he tried to give me occupation in writing for him. The subjects of "Expression," "Animal Mechanics," and "The Hand," were suited to interest me.

He had difficulty in beginning "*The Hand.*" "What class of readers is it intended for?" "I must not make it long, nor tell much that I wish to tell." "I'll try to make it suggest better thoughts," &c., &c., &c.: and such is the tone of the book. He does not intrude on the preacher's office, but he leads the reader to the truths that were deep in his own mind. In an argument opposing Buffon's fanciful views of

man's creation, he says—"A human being, pure from his Maker, with desires and passions implanted in him adapted to his state, implies something very near what we have been early taught to believe." Again, alluding to the grief of Burke for the death of his son; he says—"If in such a state there were no refuge for the mind, then were there something wanting in the scheme of nature, an imperfection in man's condition, at variance with the benevolence which is manifested in all other parts of animated nature." He concludes—"Reasons accumulate at every step for a higher estimate of the living soul, and give us assurance that its condition is the final object and end of all this machinery, and of these successive revolutions."

After various beginnings and tearings up, one day, in driving from Sevenoaks, he said, "Now, May, mark that down. It must do."

While dictating, he would stand, as if absorbed, then speak in a voice, I suppose, much the same as if he lectured, slow and deliberate, then come, put his finger on the paper, and, almost breathless, finish his sentence or observation.

His manner of composing was unequal. At times he seemed inspired, and as if the thoughts rushed too rapidly for expression. At others he seemed labouring. And then we stopped. He took his pencil, or modelling, or etching tools, and listened to reading.

The first reading in the morning was the

Scriptures. He would come to look over what I had read, and I see in my prayer-book his marks on passages of gratitude and praise for the marvellous works of the Most High (such as verse 4th of the 92nd Psalm). He looked for good in everything, and was modest in attempting to comprehend the Infinite. "We wade in shallow waters," he said.

In his speculations on some difficult subjects, he had what appeared an intuitive view of the end. He rushed on to the conclusion so quickly, that he often startled people, until he carried them back step by step, through his own almost imperceptible process.

His habit of thinking led him to see, in every arrangement of matter or spirit, a proof of Design in Creation. His trust was great. Even the pains of death he believed were soothed to the body, and that we had no pain or suffering but for our good. His knowledge taught him that what may appear to the bystanders as suffering is not always so, but is the action of involuntary muscles on the insensible frame. I used to think that his faith in "searching out" resembled that of *Columbus.*

I must recall one memorable evening. We had a cottage at Hampstead. He drove to Haverstock Hill, and walked on. He came in breathless, and sat down, saying, "Oh, May! I have discovered what will immortalize me." He placed a sheet of paper on the table, and sketched on it what he

afterwards called "*The Classification of the Nerves.*" *

I must not attempt to describe what I cannot forget; how he placed sheets of paper one over the other, to show how the nerves increased in complexity by every superadded function, until, from the first necessary or original set, they came to the grand object of man's perfection in voice and expression. He had been lecturing on the nerves, and was dissatisfied by the way in which he had to deal with the *confusion*. From his faith in "Design," he believed that in the works of Creation there is no confusion, and that all is arranged with simplicity if we could find it out. He would say to me, as if thinking aloud, "I wonder how it was given to *me* to see all this?" or, "Well! if I read this for the first time of some one else, I should say he was a clever fellow!"

Observations kept up a perpetual cheerfulness and buoyancy. In his discoveries, his first great object was to convince "*Johnnie.*" As to their reception by the profession, there was not much gratification, but he would say, "Never mind, May! it will all come right when I am gone."

I look back with wonder at the days of his struggles and difficulties, and how he bore them! He often lamented that his mind was not more

* See "An Account of Sir Charles Bell's Discoveries in the Nervous System," by Alexander Shaw, Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital, contained in the sixth edition of the Bridgewater Treatise on the Hand.

free to pursue his grand schemes for the improvement of his profession. He was devoted to scientific pursuits, and to lecturing, and to his hospital, and did not follow up that lucrative practice which almost courted him. The only distinction he made of patients was the importance of the case. If it were difficult, he was unremitting in attendance; if trifling, whoever the patient might be, he gave offence by omitting to visit as often as was wished.

His attendance at the Middlesex Hospital, for twenty-four years, was regular and unceasing. He was alert to every call there, yet nobody suffered more than he from a disturbed night.

By constant practice he became an attractive lecturer. He disliked the display of oratorical power. He desired to be easily intelligible,—and still giving a dramatic and picturesque grace. He was often overheard practising his voice in particular passages. I have been told that his rapid and effective sketches on the black-board were a great aid.

He varied his lectures year by year, and studied for each as if it were to be the only one. His notes were on strips of paper, with pen scratchings of figures rudely drawn to remind him of the "heads." Lord Cockburn took one from me in such hieroglyphics. I remember a key, a finger-post, a gallows, with other suggestive "mems."

He had the power of thoroughly engaging his

mind in what he was about, and in rapidly disengaging himself for another subject. I never saw him in what is called "flat spirits" or "*ennui*."

At times he would sit long still, apparently thinking. If I asked "What are you thinking of?" he would at once tell me:—

"I am thinking of something very curious," or it might be "of something very simple;" or the description "of a picture;" or "of an improvement he fancied in a ship;" or "of a mechanical or philosophical idea" which required attention to follow.

He read a novel, even a silly one, through and through,—"a love story that ends well," or of happy country life. His laugh was amusingly hearty,—perhaps no two people living together laughed more than ourselves,—and it often burst forth in reading Scott. His favourite passages were the return of Morton, in the third volume of "Old Mortality,"—"Edie Ochiltree," "Di Vernon." The "Bride of Lammermuir" was too tragic, and was read only once.

We met Sir Walter at dinner at Mr. Richardson's, just after he had declared his authorship. I said, "I am so glad my husband is able to be here. He was very unwell in the morning; but when he called 'Bring me Burley' ('Old Mortality') I had hopes." Sir Walter, in his kind way, said, "I am very glad to have written anything that gives pleasure to Sir Charles Bell." He said this with—to my ears—his musical *burr*. He

considered Sir Walter a great mediciner in beguiling thoughts from oneself.

From the meetings of the Examiners of the Veterinary College he would bring away witty sayings of Dr. Babington; and Charles was tempted, as he listened, by pencils before him, to make drawings, that were carried off by his friends. Sir Astley Cooper framed several. He enjoyed these meetings, along with Dr. Bright, Mr. Brodie, and other good men, and there, from Professor Coleman, he got much knowledge about horses, that he wove into the *Hand*.

He had given orders to be denied to Baron Larrey, who spoke no English, and Charles was diffident about his own French talk. However, after some unsuccessful calls, the Baron left a message at five o'clock that he would dine with Mons. Ch. Bell at six. John Shaw met him, and the talk was wonderful. At dinner, Sir Charles said—"Vous voyez que je vous regarde beaucoup, vous me rappelez les traits d'un grand homme." "Ah," said the Baron, "Oliver Cromwell. Mais je vous assure que je ne suis pas homme cruel, il ne faut pas juger." Then he came forth with anecdotes of Egypt, and of the false reports concerning Napoleon there, whom he seemed to worship. He was very happy, and remained till eleven o'clock, looking over the sketches of the

wounded at Waterloo, and even recognising cases there in the French Hospital.

Charles was of a very grateful nature. When he was told of anything gratifying that had been said of him, his eyes suffused; and although naturally quick and warm in temper, he was so easily pacified that it was almost amusing. His indignation was strongly roused at any mean, base, and unworthy conduct; and he had one strong distaste, pretention and false assumption, particularly in science. But as regarded himself, if any one had been supposed to offend him—he forgot them! His mind was full of other things.

He often felt that he was misjudged and misunderstood. "You see, I am not a quarrelsome fellow! There is not a man in my profession with whom I am not good friends!" But he was too much occupied to form intimacies.

One morning he was told that Dr. Cheyne (of Dublin) had come to breakfast. They were early friends, but in their long separation, Charles had heard that his dear John Cheyne had become exclusively devoted to religious services, and he dreaded the meeting. "Come back, May, and tell me how he looks. If he is not the same John Cheyne, 'I'm no weel, I'll not come down.'" Gladly I could say, "He is the same dear John Cheyne." How they met! and how the joy, and the wit, and the affection poured forth from the

earliest to the latest hours, made this indeed a happy day.

Charles visited him twice afterwards, during his illness, and within a few days of his death, at Sherrington, in Bucks. He had retired from his great practice in Dublin to die in peace. He was indeed a holy-minded man, and he and Charles conversed much on subjects of the highest interest in their walks on the banks of the Ouse. He gave me a small picture, by Teniers, to remind me of the two friends. Can I forget the droll way he introduced us to Cowper's *summer-house* at Olney? A mere sentry-box in a cabbage-garden.

Charles had much regard for the Napier family, and we were, from my early affection for the wife of Sir George, very intimate. One of the five brothers came in hurriedly one evening, for Charles to visit their old nurse, Dewdney, who had met with an accident. At that time, these fine young men were much cherished in London society, but at whatever hour in the day, or late, there were found two of these kind-hearted brothers watching and amusing their old nurse. She would say, "Come two at a time, boys, I like to hear you talking."

Many pleasant instances have been told me of his delicate generosity, and his great charity and sympathy. If a patient came into his room, and happened to ask what was the fee, he would say

—"I really don't know who you are, but I wish the rich to pay for the poor."

He sometimes mingled the benevolent with the picturesque. He could not pass an old beggar or a negro; and an Irishman in rags was rather attractive. But a painter, or a young student in difficulties, never called on him in vain.

As to riches, he made up his mind that they were to consist of a limitation of desires and economy. But the pleasures of life we possessed from the love and kindness of friends: he often said—"Here we are living at 5000*l.* a-year!" These good friends liked to see his hearty enjoyment, and did all they could to contribute to it.* He was modest, and did not speak much, but there was raciness and originality in his talk. He was a favourite with ladies and children, from the simplicity of his manner.

He believed that his tastes were simple, and that he could be contented with little; but he liked to have things about him elegant and handsome, although they might be few. He desired money only that he might be of use to others. The calls upon him were equal to the mistaken belief that he was a rich man, and he did give most generously. It was said—"Sir Charles pays like a Prince!"

He liked to see the enjoyment of existence in

* On the lovely wooded brae of Ancrum, that leads from the Ale up to the house, Charles used to rest after fishing, and the seat is ever associated with his name by the family of Scott.

animals. His Skye-terriers, Striach and Feoch were a perpetual pleasure. They would spring from the bank into the water when he was fishing and nestle on a stone at his feet.

He called the phaeton his country house. We would drive to some pleasant inn at Sevenoaks or Box-hill, or Chenies, and, by spreading the materials for writing, drawing, and reading on a green cloth, give a home look. The evening walk, and the drive home by moonlight, or early next morning, were delightful. While he drove I pencilled down his suggestive thoughts—"Now, mark that; we'll work it up."

He called it "Marion's Journal"—amusing to call it so, the fact being, that as we drove along he spoke in my name, and I jotted down my supposed beautiful descriptions and remarks.

Latterly these quiet walks gave way to the more animated enjoyment of fishing.*

His love of fishing was so remarkable and so great a solace, that I must tell how it began. Mr. Richardson induced him one day to go to Panshanger and enjoy the saunter by the river-side. He saw his friend's delight in the sport, and believed that it was the very thing for himself. He came home pleased with the prospect of such an association with the country.

If he were doomed to a London professional

* He was methodical, and never in a hurry. He foresaw dangers or difficulties, and looked to the harness and linch pins, and to have money in his pocket.

life, his mind would lose its freshness; and for the health of mind and body, he must have a pursuit that would carry him from the bustling world to scenes of quiet meditation and to nature.

From his habits he could not be inactive; he must fish or sketch, and he did both alternately. In the bright hours he laid aside the rod for the pencil. He was often on the water-side before sunrise—indeed, before he could see his flies; and he did enjoy these morning hours. I came down with his breakfast, bringing books and arrangements for passing the whole day,—even with cloaks and umbrellas,—for no weather deterred us. He liked me to see him land his fish, and waved his hat for me to come.

At the little inn of Chenies we were welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Pratt, as if it were our own home. A lovely place it is, and driving there in the evening was very sweet. We saw the meadows, and the mill, and the sun lighting up the little river like a stream of gold. We returned home late next day, and his health was so well preserved by the exercise that I had cause to bless it.

There it was that he composed and dictated the favourite parts of his works. But he left these enjoyments without regret, as he could return to his other work and pursuits with renewed vigour.

His fishing is associated with the names of Mr. Richardson, Dr. Babington, Mr. Warburton, Dr. Franks, Dr. Hume, Dr. Fergusson, and Chantrey. He made some diverting sketches of these happy

fishermen in their earnest pursuit. Many characteristic notes of appointments came for Charles.

For our holiday in August, the horses were sent on some stages, and we followed, to begin our tour of five or six weeks. The course of rivers was the attraction; the scenes and solitude were charming, and the inns were suited to them; often very primitive, even to sacks of potatoes in our room. There were, however, friends to be visited, a most pleasant variety.

We travelled, in our slow way, through many parts of England, Wales, and Scotland. One year the question was, "Where shall we go?" The map was looked at, and to name an object, I said, "Hafod." At the gate of the park, he said, "Why should we go in? the scene around us cannot be surpassed." He disliked entering gates of parks, except such as gave a hope of "fishing," Latimers, Panshanger, or Broadlands.

The 1st of October was the first day of lecture. He prepared for his course in these tours, and returned well to begin.

He put his heart in all he did. To satisfy *himself*, he must be doing his best. And I liked to hear him say—"I have given a capital lecture to-day." After a hard study,—which he never gave up until he had attained his object,—he would come to me animated and gay, "Now I'll resin a bit."*

* Alluding to the Scotch cobbler's delight, when exchanging his last for his fiddle, when his day's work was over.

"THE SUTER AND THE SOU."

From a Drawing by Sir Charles Bell, given to the late John Richardson, Esq., of Kirklands.

Page 419.

His "fishing" was carried even into the drawing-room. To "dress" and to finger his hooks, and even to practise the turn of his wrist with his rod were amusements.

He could scarcely stop until he had accomplished what he designed. I sometimes dreaded to see him begin to draw, knowing the dissatisfaction he often felt with his efforts. He tore up so many first attempts; but when he succeeded, he would call me to admire and praise. "I cannot get on without a 'Euge! bene!'" He would admire his own productions with the same simplicity he did those of others. He drew or etched more delicately and more effectively when read to, otherwise he got on too quickly.* The minute power of his eye and hand was remarkable, and, I believe, was shown in all that he did.

On his table there was a row of books with soothing titles — Standard poets, White's Sel-

* He liked to sketch scenes from old Scottish ballads, or Sir Walter's novels, such as "The Carle he cam o'er the Croft," "Dumbydykes on the wildyard Powney," and so forth. One day his laugh was heard from his study; he was found alone, sketching a drawing for Mr. Richardson, of the "Suter and the Sou" (the cobbler and the pig). The "fleeching" expression of the cobbler's face as he flattered the creature to get hold of its "bristle," was more than he could stand, as he was composing it.

The ballad runs thus:

The Suter gied the sou a kiss,
"Grumph," quoth she, "it's for my briss."
"Wha gied ye sae sweet a mou?"
Quoth the Suter to the sou.
"Grumph," quoth she, "and wha gied ye
A tongue sae sleeked and sae slee."

Dedicated to —— ——.

bourne, Walton, Scott, &c. He had not a copy of Byron in the house, but "Childe Harold" was our guide in Italy. He had great pleasure in contemplating a work of genius or power, and was especially pleased with the earnestness and success of young men in his profession. But it gave him almost pain to see bad or indifferent efforts in Art from the hopelessness of the artist's success in his mistaken pursuit.

He loved music that touched his fancy, and suggested beautiful and graceful movements,—landscapes, palaces and processions, and he liked to describe them. A Scotch or English ballad affected him easily, especially his mother's song, "The Flowers of the Forest."

It was a great pang for us to leave our old home in London, Alexander (Shaw), and dear friends there, for Edinburgh; but I knew that the hope of an easy professorial life, love for George, and ready access to the beautiful country around Edinburgh had been long cherished by Charles.

We drove to Scotland in fine weather, resting at the houses of precious friends in the way; among others at Mr. Holland's, Dumbleton, and Mr. Marshall's, Hallsteads, finishing our visits at Mr. Richardson's, Kirklands. I touch on these names with feelings of love and gratitude that I dare not express.

We came to Scotland at the right season, and were welcomed by all whom we wished to wel-

come us, and much of what we anticipated was fulfilled.

When Charles left London for Edinburgh, his professional friends—more than a hundred good names—desired to give him a mark of their regard. Sir C. Lbcock had the kind office of asking in what form he wished the plate to be. We at once said a tea-urn. It was beautifully made by Rundle and Bridges, and came to him in Edinburgh, with an inscription by Sir H. Halford. In expectation of the tea-urn, Charles had begged from his lady friends cups and saucers. And these pleasant London associations were kept up in Edinburgh when friends came "to tea and sunset."

The windows of Ainslie Place looked to the glorious colouring of the north-west skies, to Corstorphine Hill, and the distant Grampians. The garden was in terraces, down to the water of Leith, and the walks there, among the sweet-briar hedges, made our home in Edinburgh very delightful.

Let me indulge in the recollection of a bright November day in 1841. After attending the Hospital and giving a Lecture, we set off, along with Lord Cockburn, in great glee, for Kirklands, for the wedding of the loved H— R—.

Next forenoon he dictated a Paper for the Royal Society, Edinburgh; and then drew, while I read. At two o'clock he had a Consultation; and in the afternoon he caught trout in the Ale. The wedding was a beautiful scene, attended by

the neighbouring families of M. and S. My husband had adorned himself in his court white satin vest and Guelphic badge, and, with his bright countenance, fine forehead, and white hair, was radiant. In the evening he *danced* with as much spirit as the youngest, and on the following day enjoyed the conversation of those who remained at Kirklands.

He came home one evening from Professor Forbes' much amused. A Section from the British Association was expected in Edinburgh, and learned men met to prepare for their entertainment. Charles had said,—"In driving up the Pentlands to ——, I lost my way in a wild cart-track, and came upon the most perfect specimen of our geology." They were in consternation. "Oh, Sir Charles, we beg you will not mention that; we are keeping it snug for the Geological Section. It is quite a pet bit, and a secret."

His love of nature and constant recollection of nature's God, strengthened by the course of his studies,—for his works on design were in the course of his lectures,—his deep feeling, his truthfulness, his freshness, his taste, and the gracefulness of all he said, were all brought out on our Italian journey.

In May, 1840, when we went to Italy, there were no railroads. The question, "Must we have a courier?" was important. I knew that the

tour must be longer or shorter, as the money he had arranged for it held out. I had confidence that his name would help us through difficulties, at least in the medical world, and I offered to be courier. In posting from Paris to Chalons-sur-Saône, I looked more at the livre de poste than the country. Charles hated the calculations of "kilometres," and of "demipostes," and "demi-cheval." It was a rest to be in the boat at Chalons. As I expected, his name carried us along. The hospitals were like homes for him, and in every city the doctors congregated about him. We were a month in going to Rome; five weeks there; and a month in returning. A Genoese doctor said, "Ah, Sir Charles, you will be much roast in Rome." We could not leave Edinburgh till after the Session, in April.

His record of that journey is preserved in his notes and sketches on the spot. We were in Italy, but it was Charles Bell in Italy that was the charm.

In returning from Rome, Charles was in the steamboat office at Basle. A gentleman, travel-worn, came in hurriedly. "Are you Sir Charles Bell? I am Dr. Arnold. We have been tracing you for the last three days. Mrs. Arnold has been ill; will you come and see her?" The conversation that evening, on Italy, may be imagined. They never met again. Charles died in April, 1842, and Dr. Arnold in the following June.

M. B.

ADDITIONAL LETTERS AND NOTES.

1834.

FROM THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON SINCLAIR.

The Vicarage, Kensington, 12th March, 1862.

When the British Association held its fourth meeting, in 1834, at Edinburgh, one of the most attractive announcements was a lecture on the Nervous System, by Sir Charles Bell. The notice excited great attention. An interesting account of his great anatomical discovery was anticipated, and the lecture room was crowded with magnates of science.

It was only by going early that my brother and I could obtain admission to one of the furthest rows of seats. But we should have considered ourselves abundantly rewarded for our trouble, had it been ten times greater. After the lapse of nearly thirty years, I still dwell with pleasure on the dignified manner of the lecturer, and the clearness with which, on a profoundly philosophic subject, he made himself intelligible, even to non-professional hearers like myself. As he was about to address no ordinary audience, I expected a written composition; but I do not think that he had even a single note before him. He felt well-grounded confidence in his ability to speak extemporaneously on a subject which he thoroughly understood. What gave me greatest satisfaction, was the religious tone of the lecture. He remarked that the doctrine of final causes, when rightly applied, so far from being "barren," is, on the contrary, our chief source of knowledge. All scientific discovery, he observed, proceeds upon the prin-

ciple that Nature does nothing in vain, and that every fibre of the human frame has a specific purpose, which it is the object of science to ascertain. In the course of his anatomical demonstrations, he had observed a division in some of the larger nerves. With the help of a microscope, he found that this division extended even to the most minute. He inferred that it had an object. He suspected that each portion had a separate function; and his endeavour was to discover, by observation and experiment, what that function was. Among other conjectures, it occurred to him that the one division might be the nerve of motion, and the other of sensation. After numerous experiments, he became convinced that his conjecture was correct, and ventured to publish his discovery to the world. "I do not see," he added, "how any man can be a discoverer in anatomy, or even an anatomist at all, without proceeding on the principle which, in this instance, was my own guide,—that there is a final cause of everything—a purpose—a function —which every fibre of the human body is intended by Divine Wisdom to subserve."

FROM DR. ROBERT FERGUSON.*

QUEEN STREET, *4th May*, 1842.

MY DEAR LADY BELL,

I have read with the deepest feelings of reverence and affection, your notes of my friend, your husband.

Did life consist in the flesh only, and not in the spirit, he would indeed have departed; but while my mind figures him ever present to it, while a portion of the living principle within me is made up of him, his thoughts, lessons, affections, and confidences mingling inseparably with mine, I cannot fancy him gone, though the ear hear him not, nor the eye see him. So far my grief, poignant as it is, is somewhat assuaged by the life of my memory. I know you will now only look to the future, and the view which will once more

* Dr. Ferguson was an early and favourite pupil and friend of Sir Charles Bell.

present your union with him will be of unmixed joy. The present, though gratefully received as the sphere of our duties, will have little to excite you; but you have the past to dwell on, and the forthcoming to repose with.

Ever affectionately yours,

ROBERT FERGUSON.

LORD JEFFREY TO LORD COCKBURN.

"HAILYBURY, *8th May*, 1842.

"This is a sad blow, the loss of good, kind-hearted, happy Charlie Bell. It met me here on my arrival. I do not know whether poor George, or his wife, is most to be pitied; but the loss will be terrible, and irreparable to both. Except George himself, I have not so old and intimate a friend left; and it may be a kind of comfort to think I cannot have many more such losses to bear. We were familiar from boyhood, and though much separated from residence and occupation, never had a notion of alienation or a cessation of that cordiality and reliance on each other's affection which is also a comfort, even now."

Lord Cockburn, some years later, when writing to Lady Bell, after the perusal of a French memoir of her husband, says:—"The only thing that I don't like in it is the impression which a few sentences tend to produce, that the person he describes was not happy. This idea seems to me to arise from the casual expressions of Sir Charles himself, of some of those accidental and temporary escapes of sensibility, in which any man of mind is apt to indulge, but which do not denote his prevailing condition. He may have mused, and in his musings been sad—which is the character of contemplation; but if I ever knew a generally and practically happy man, it was Sir Charles Bell."

Alexander Shaw wrote, on the same occasion,—"It cannot be easy for a stranger to comprehend either the heart or understanding of Sir Charles. His mind was a garden of

flowers and a forest of hardy trees. Its exercise in profound thought gave him high enjoyment; yet he would often avow his pleasure in being still a boy, and he did love life and nature with the freshness of youth. I therefore repeat,—if I ever knew a happy man, it was Sir Charles Bell."

FROM LORD JEFFREY TO LADY BELL.

CRAIGCROOK, Sunday, *July 2nd*, 1842.

MY VERY DEAR LADY BELL,

I cannot tell you how often I have attempted to write to you, nor make you understand, perhaps, how strangely my heart always failed me!—but, as I never sat down for that purpose without increase of pain to myself, I felt as if I should only distress you by executing it. The impression was probably foolish—and perhaps somewhat selfish too, in its origin. But what, after all, can I say to you, but what you must already know, or can easily imagine? What, but that I have mourned over you by day and by night? and felt how vain it was to think of *consoling* you, by dwelling on all that made him who is lost to us so worthy of our love? And yet it is surely good for us, since it is so natural to dwell on such things,—and *to you* it must indeed be a consolation unspeakable, to reflect that you made the happiness of his existence while it lasted,—and neither neglected any duty, nor missed any occasion of enjoyment that presented itself in the course of your innocent and united lives. That thought must be soothing to you to the last moment of your existence,—and, if duly cherished, will enable you, I trust, to bear up against the weight of sorrow with which you must be oppressed. Yet I know that it cannot fill the void which you must now feel in your being . . . . . nor very much deaden the sense of your deep desolation. For that higher comfort you must look to a higher quarter! and I rejoice to learn that you have looked for, and *found it* there. I am not worthy to talk to you on such a subject. But it is a relief

to my heart to know that you have attained to a state of blessed tranquillity; and are able again to occupy yourself with the feelings and prospects of others; and to find that there are still left to you on earth some that are justly dear to you, and from whose love you may yet derive not only consolation, but enjoyment. That, after all, is the sovereign balm for hurt spirits, and the only earthly cure for the wounds of affection,—and it must be sought for in affection itself. I need not tell you how wide-spread and heart-struck was the sorrow for the great calamity which has befallen you,—nor how deep, and cordial, and lasting the sympathy with which everyone turned to you. For myself, I may say, with truth, that few hours have since passed over me, without bringing you to my thoughts, with crowds of recollections, from which I do not willingly turn away,—and I cannot yet pass that deserted dwelling, which used to be the home of concord, cheerfulness, and love, without a pang as sharp as that which I felt on my first glance at its desolation.

* * * * *

And so Heaven bless you, my very dear, constant, galless and guileless old friend. I know that you will not forget me, nor suspect me of forgetting you. Write to me, if it will give you any pleasure or relief, but not otherwise. We shall still meet somewhere in this world. With kind regards to Mrs. Shaw, and all who are dear to you,

Ever very affectionately yours,

F. JEFFREY.

FRAGMENTS ON FLY-FISHING AND SKETCHING.

ROUGH NOTES ON FISHING.

He proposed to write a book on fishing that would please every one.

M. B.

If you mention White's "Selborne" to any man of taste, he says, "Oh! you like that book! I am glad of it." Why should that volume be so much admired? Because he is perfectly natural. He takes you to the back of the village, the Hangar. Because he dwells with nature—enters into the life and conversation of the meanest living thing, even the old tortoise in the garden.

To do this, a man must have an object. It may be natural history, or botany, or agriculture, or sketching, or the search after the picturesque. But there is an exception to all these: by agriculture, he spends his money; by sketching, he gets aches in his back; natural history and botany are studies. We are not in search of occupation, of duties—but of relaxation, fitting us to return to the business of life.

By fishing, you contemplate nature; you are interested in the weather, in the winds that blow; in insects, their season, and their habits and propagation. And the fishes are a study: they are timid and voracious; they have their time of rest, and of activity, and of feeding.

Then your many faculties are in exercise; your eye acquires a capacity for distant and minute objects; your hand, dexterity; your fingers, neatness. It is in fishing

that you are brought to spots of secluded loveliness. M. said to me, "I do not believe that you ever look at the landscape!" "You are mistaken," says I; "to-day, I fell flat on my back, and, when I looked up and saw the rocks, and hanging oaks, and birchwood, I thought I never beheld such enchantment." The truth is, that the scene does come upon you unaware; you are pursuing your sport, until, of a sudden, a scene bursts on you that arrests attention—and, coming so, your pleasure is more than when you go in search of it! And then the waters—how interesting, how fine their varieties—which, by your wandering looks, you never think of.

* * * * *

A clear blue sky, with flying clouds, which turn out a white satin edge, unfavourable; for suddenly the water assumes a strange darkness, and then the large trout scud to their holes.

Never did the Don and Sancho retire to such a spot. Behind, is the wood; before, in this pool so deep, so dark, with a stream running into it, the very spot I would recommend to a young fly-fisher. Then, these overhanging rocks, that fantastic ash, which flourishes most in the north countrie, and the dashing of that fall of forty feet from the side of that dark rock—see how beautifully it escapes from under the green foliage, and what a freshness it gives to this solitude! And the fishes, too; they enjoy the air by which that cataract, pouring into the pool, vivifies and refreshes them. Do you *feel* how peculiar the silver tone is of that little stream joining the river? It must be in part from the hollow, overhanging rock; and yet, strange to say, it puts me in mind of a different scene. In London, in a court in the Temple, there is a little basin, into which a stream of water falls, and sounds like that tinkling water from the rock. I have stood there with young men, now the magnates of the land, and pointed at, the ornaments of

that great country. To me, tied to the great city, that fountain—so they called it—was ever a bitter scene of contrast. How long must I labour to win the privilege of such a scene and such a time as this? I did not then know that the most ingenuous mind—a poet all heart—one to whom nature was all—should live there contented, and never desire more!

"For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths, that spring out of the valleys and hills."—Deuteronomy, ch. viii. 7. I wish I could quote the next verse.

Salmon Fishing.

(From a leaf separate, in the locked red book).

"The water is very dark, and the rocks and trees obscure. The fishes have monstrous heads, and stare at one!" "Come, come, get up, you are dreaming; it is four o'clock." "Strange, and so I was. I dream of fishing, and the day is ever murky, and the waters dark. I have a notion that we do not dream of things bright. I do not remember to have dreamed of glorious sunshine—is it so with you?—the senses . . . . pooh, pooh—the senses. Why, the morning promises one of the six days of the year, and you talk of dreaming, and the senses ——! The water is of a transparent brown, and is falling. Salmon have been seen leaping above the linn, and jack; somebody caught two grilse last night, of six and eight pounds—so dispatch—there's news for you."

Well, what to-day? we must boat it; nothing can be done from the side. Our friend here has three flat-bottomed boats, one on each beach of this noble river. When we come to the rapids we step out, and walk to the next boat; everything is provided.

I hope we shall not run the risk I did yesterday; this is the most rapid river in Scotland. I had gone down below sternly intending to fish for sea-trout from the side, but

finding no success, I allowed myself to be seduced into the boat. I succeeded in reaching the powerful middle stream, and at length had on a fish, when the foolish boatman, partaking my excitement, forgot his oars, and down we went like a shot. No stones were visible in the stream, but a cataract spouted up too surely, showing that a large rock lay there. Over that rock we went, stern foremost, and as we descended the water dashed over us. We were within an ace of being swamped. "We were nearly getting a ducking there," said the fellow. "A ducking!" I should have gone down like a stone; my iron shoes, my pockets full of hooks and tin boxes—I was helpless. But, to-day, we are under better guidance. We have a careful landlord, and his regular and respectful boatmen.

Now, the gaff, and there he is, sir—a noble fish. But where is this we are? What a paradise is here; the yellow sand, the beautiful grass knoll, short cut by sheep; that noble spreading tree, the depth of shade, as you look into the wood. "Why, bless your honour, this is the very spot you raved about last autumn, and by that I know it; the fish took at the precise spot when you hooked him before." But such a fairy spot, so soft and green, and dark, from which to look out on these boiling waters. It would be a pity to spoil the sylvan solitude, else, here I would say should be a cottage placed—no, for good reason.

Fly Fishing, in sunshine and clear water.

There are many trout in these waters flowing south, and tributaries to the Tweed. The tackle I put into your hands when the Teviot was in flood, and the wind blowing against the stream, will not serve your purpose now. Take the smallest gut, and two small flies, pale blue, called in the London shops the willow fly; stand well off the water, and throw across the stream . . . . What success? None. I have twice lost my fine line by hooking the bushes

on the further margin. Attend. The sun is in your back, your shadow is in the water. This will not do; stand six yards off, throw your *stretcher* just under the bank, and on that fine stream, and observe to hit the precise spot. Measure your line, throw it out, fully—so; it hardly reaches the stream; advance a step, now it falls in the middle. Draw out a yard of line; now you perceive it cannot hit the bank, yet lights just under it, and you have your reward; you raised two small trout—persevere, and you will fill your pannier.

Do not attempt the smooth pools, but walk smartly down the river, and take the streams just where they flow into the pool. If a breeze comes, to make what your attendant will call a fine purl on the water, then throw fairly into the broad water. Good; you have a trout where you saw none, although you can count every pebble in the bottom. Be gentle: step back, and draw the trout on the gravel; direct his head this way, and his motions will bring him to land. And so you perceive that in this way a single hair line will bring out a large trout.

SKETCHING.

The pleasure of it? The same that you have in admiring a fine face, when you trace every lineament, and it is fixed as the idea of beauty in your mind.

Of my journeys I remember the scenes I sketched, the turn of the road, the distance, middle distance, and foreground.

The whole objects and the sentiments of my breast at the time,—much besides,—are blanks in my memory.

The young Lawrence, when he saw a beauty in Bath, ran over her features, tracing them with his finger on the crown of his hat, and in this way fixed them mechanically in his mind. In going home he copied his ideal portraits, and made them beautiful resemblances.

For the same object Hogarth drew odd faces he might

see in a coffee-house on his nail. Who could object to a man drawing on his nail ? *

Notes taken from a small locked red morocco book, headed, "Fragments on Fly-fishing and Sketching."

Together with these original remarks, are noted down quotations from Charles Lamb, from Pope, Swift, from the Voyage of the Beagle, from Sir H. Davy, &c.

* He was thinking of what happened to himself in the British Gallery of Old Pictures. Looking at the charming landscape by Both, of Philip baptizing the Eunuch, he traced on his visiting card, in pencil, the distinct parts of a picture, trying to reduce the parts to a system. The keeper civilly told him that there must be no copies taken of these pictures.

THE END.

BRADBURY, EVANS, AND CO., PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

00023641

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 23 January, 2019